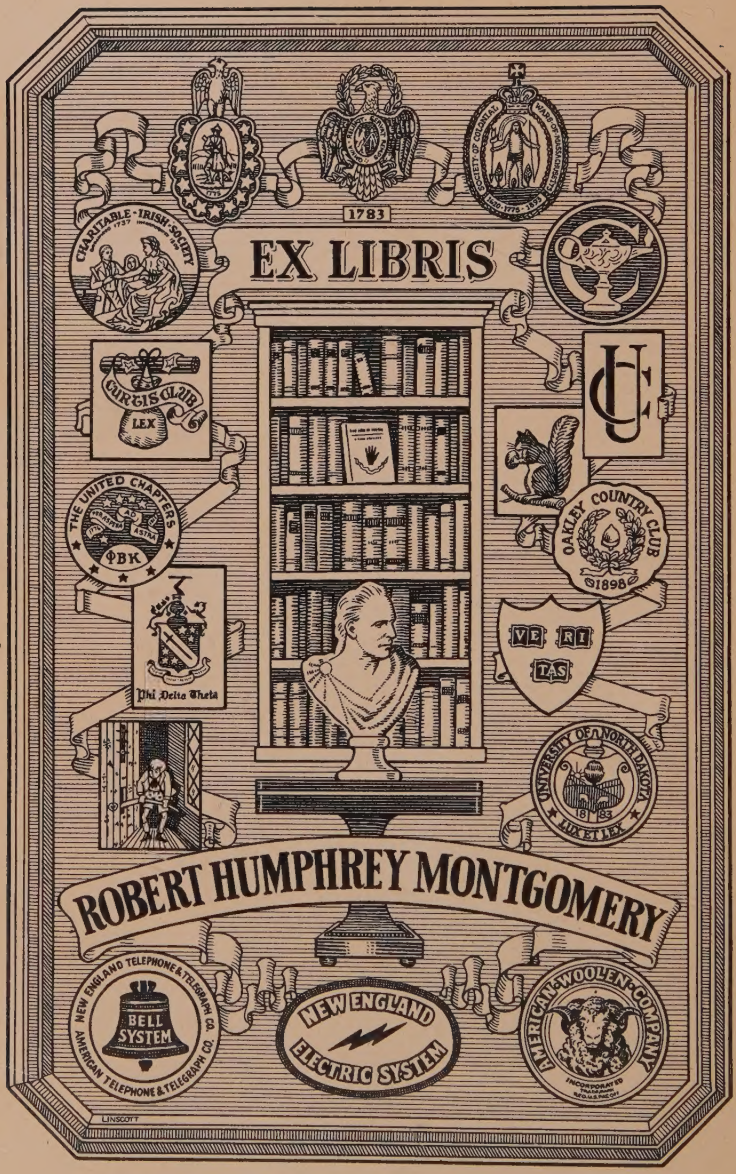
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LINSCOTT

THE MYSTERY OF "Mr. W. H."

EDWARD DE VERE, SEVENTEENTH EARL OF OXFORD, AGE 25.

From the portrait at Welbeck Abbey. Reproduced by permission of His Grace the Duke of Portland.

THE MYSTERY OF "Mr. W. H."

BY

COLONEL B. R. WARD, C.M.G.

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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" No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell :
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it ; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse,
When I, perhaps, compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse ;
But let your love even with my life decay :
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone."

Sonnet No. 71.

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PREFACE

THE following pages describe a series of Shakespeare discoveries, principally connected with *The Sonnets*, made at Hackney during the summer of 1922, followed by a series of inferences drawn from these discoveries, all tending to show the truth of the hypothesis first put forward by Mr. J. Thomas Looney in 1920 that Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, and William Shakespeare are identical personalities. To proclaim oneself a supporter of the de Vere theory of authorship is, under present conditions, equivalent in the opinion of a large number of people to a confession either of mental deficiency or of moral obliquity. A short personal explanation may perhaps, therefore, be permitted to me at this point, in order to show how I found myself *dans cette galère* and why I have been driven to found a society which actually goes so far as to welcome free research on the subject of Shakespearean authorship.

On the 13th February, 1922, I was invited to lecture to a literary society in Gillingham, Kent, on " The Sonnet in English Literature." I went down to Gillingham by an afternoon train from Victoria, and while looking at the magazines on W. H. Smith's bookstall for something to read in the train, I noticed an article in the *National Review* entitled " Shakespeare : Lord Oxford or Lord Derby ? " by J. Thomas Looney. I bought the magazine and read it on my way down.

I have been familiar for many years with the Baconian controversy, but have never been a convinced Baconian, as the evidence has not satisfied me that he could have been the actual author, although I thought he might possibly

have been the editor of the plays. I was, therefore, a Stratfordian—not an enthusiastic one, but a Stratfordian for want of a better hypothesis.

The reading of Mr. Looney's article did not convert me, but it decided me to go into the question later on. During my lecture I quoted several of Shakespeare's sonnets in illustration of my theme, and spoke of the author as the actor who came up to London from Stratford in 1586 or thereabouts, and who probably saw the funeral of Sir Philip Sidney, who was buried in old St. Paul's on the 16th February, 1587.

After the lecture, a Frenchman in the audience came up to me and said : " You spoke very decidedly about Shakespeare going here and going there, but do you know that a Frenchman has written a book to show that the Earl of Derby wrote the plays ? and it looks very like it too ! "

I said " Yes, I know about that, and intend to read what he has to say. At the same time I am doubtful whether any such hypothesis is necessary, as William Shakespeare's bad handwriting can be explained as having been caused by writer's cramp." I had recently read a pamphlet entitled *Shakespeare's Handwriting*, by the late Dr. Leftwich, M.D.

The Frenchman acknowledged this to be a point worth consideration, but evidently he did not attach much weight to it.

When I got back to London, I bought Mr. Looney's book, and by the time I had got through about a third of it, I felt convinced that he had practically proved his case. I then read Professor Lefranc's two volumes, and came to the conclusion that Derby had had a hand in the work as well as Oxford, and that he may have written *The Tempest* as an Introduction to the First Folio of 1623. As Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, lived at Hackney for the last eight, or possibly twelve, years of his life, I determined

to make some researches in that locality in order to find out where he had lived, and any other details about his life there. My researches were more fruitful than I ever anticipated. The results may be summarised as follows.

I found in the parish register of St. John's Church an entry which clears up—so far as I can see, conclusively—the long debated mystery of the dedication of *The Sonnets ;* and I also found a remarkable series of correspondences between Oxford's life and residence at Hackney and the dates and circumstances of publication of the Shakespeare Quartos.

The first two chapters of the book describe in some detail the foregoing discoveries, and show how strikingly they confirm Mr. Looney's hypothesis as to the identity of Edward de Vere and William Shakespeare.

These chapters were originally published in the *National Review*—in September and October, 1922—and I have to thank the editor, Mr. L. J. Maxse, for his kind permission to reproduce them in book form. Although the evidence put forward in the *National Review* is far from being negligible in character, no attempt has so far been made to explain it away.

" *La consigne est de tout ignorer*," as Professor Lefranc expressed it in a recent number of the Belgian magazine *Le Flambeau*. Or as Sir George Greenwood has wittily put it in his introductory chapter to Mr. E. W. Smithson's *Baconian Essays :* " The writer is guilty of vile and intolerable heresy (to wit, that he shares the conviction of the late Henry James—and many others alive and dead—that the author of *Hamlet* and *Lear* and *Othello* was actually a well-educated man, of high position and the representative of the highest culture of his day), and is therefore *taboo* to the editors of all decent journals."

After two months of complete silence, broken only by a very kind and appreciative article in the *Hackney Spectator*

of the 8th September, 1922, I came to the conclusion that this curious attitude on the part of all " decent journals " could only be dealt with by means of group action, which might serve to encourage some of the many thousands of doubters that exist up and down the country to join a society definitely founded on the basis of free research.

Hence the organisation of the Shakespeare Fellowship on the 6th November, 1922, with Sir George Greenwood as its President, and the Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G., M.D., Professor Abel Lefranc, Mr. J. Thomas Looney, Mr. L. J. Maxse, and Mr. William T. Smedley as Vice-Presidents, the *Hackney Spectator* being our official organ.

As the foregoing names indicate, the Fellowship includes the originators of the Derby and Oxford hypotheses, two distinguished Baconians, as well as Shakespeare students who are dissatisfied with Stratfordian orthodoxy.

A report of the Foundation Meeting of the Fellowship is given in Appendix G at the end of this volume. This Appendix also contains a statement of the objects of the Fellowship.

So much for my personal explanation. I have, I hope, shown how it has come about that this book is the manifesto of a society as well as a record of research, and why it is that I now call upon all Shakespeare students who set a higher value on truth than on orthodoxy to join the Shakespeare Fellowship and to judge all questions of evidence " upon the oaths of judgment and reason " ; for—as we all profess to believe, even if Sir Toby Belch had not assured us of it long ago—" *they* have been grand-jurymen since before Noah was a sailor."

The first two chapters that follow are printed exactly as they first appeared in the September and October numbers of the *National Review*.

3rd January, 1923.

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THE MYSTERY OF "Mr. W. H."

CHAPTER I

THE MARRIAGE OF WILLIAM HALL

"Of this fact I am as confident as I can be, in a world where *il ne faut jurer de rien*, that whoever wrote the Shakespeare Sonnets was mainly responsible for the Shakespeare Plays."—*Is it Shakespeare?* 1903, p. 147, by the Rev. WALTER BEGLEY.

READERS of the *National Review* will remember a couple of articles which appeared in that magazine in November 1921 and February 1922, attributing the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, in the first article, to the Earl of Derby, and, in the second one, to his father-in-law, the Earl of Oxford.

My interest was so much aroused by the articles in question that I lost no time in procuring Mr. J. Thomas Looney's two books, *Shakespeare Identified in Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, and his edition of *The Poems of Edward de Vere*, as well as Professor Abel Lefranc's work in two volumes entitled: *Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare, William Stanley* 6^{me} *Comte de Derby*.

After carefully reading the four volumes, I came to the following conclusions:

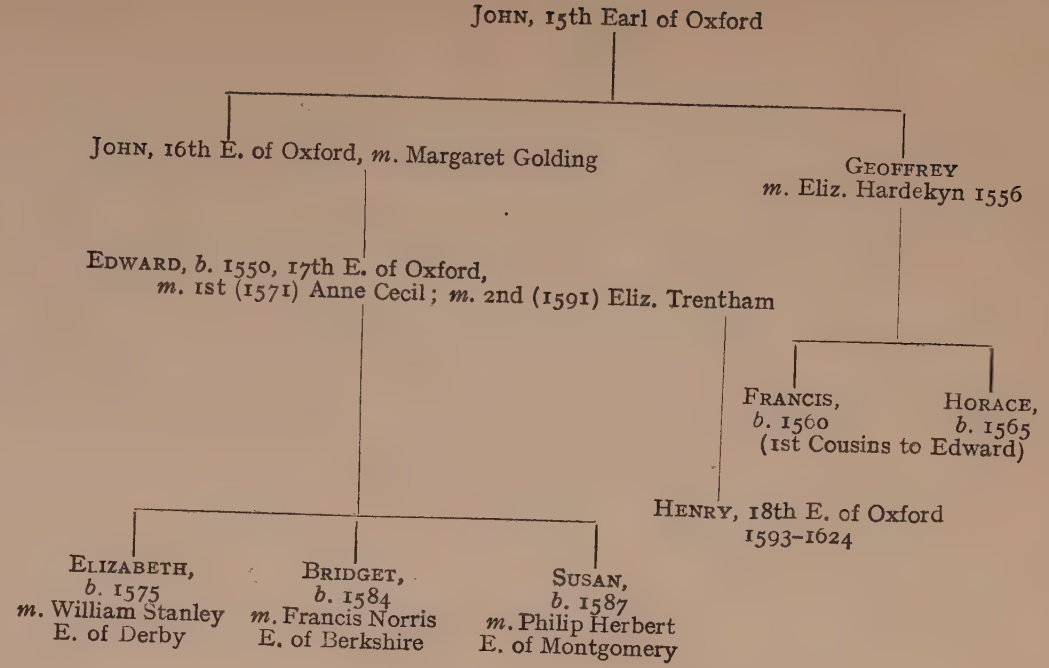
1. That Mr. Looney had proved his case as regards the authorship of *Venus and Adonis;* and that with reference to the authorship of *All's Well*, *Troilus*, *Hamlet* and *The Sonnets* his arguments, if not constituting an absolute proof, pointed at least to a high degree of probability.

2. That Professor Lefranc had conclusively shown that Derby was concerned in the composition of *Love's Labour's Lost*, and that his authorship of *The Tempest* was in a high degree probable.

3. That the two authors—Looney and Lefranc—mutually corroborated one another, probably owing to the fact that Derby, who married Oxford's daughter Elizabeth, had on occasions assisted his father-in-law. Professor Lefranc, indeed, makes this suggestion in the case of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. At the same time, Mr. Looney argues against Oxford's authorship of *The Tempest*, to this extent, therefore, supporting Professor Lefranc's case.

Having arrived at the foregoing conclusions, and knowing from a reference in *Shakespeare Identified* (p. 239) that the Earl of Oxford was living at Hackney in 1601, I determined to undertake some local researches which might throw further light on the subject.

Historical research among Parish Registers and local histories is a form of sport very much like hunting. A searcher must have a working hypothesis in his mind before he starts his investigations. The working hypothesis



The de Vere Family

in the mind of a huntsman before he draws a covert is that there may be a fox in it. If his working hypothesis is wrong, he will not be able to show any sport.

Similarly, if a searcher among historical records starts with an erroneous working hypothesis, he will not enjoy any sport, or if he does start any game it will not be the particular game he is after.

A good example of this is to be seen in that admirable monument of patient research, Mrs. Stopes' *Third Earl of Southampton*, published in 1921. Mrs. Stopes writes in her Preface:

> I must confess that I did not start this work for the sake of the Earl of Southampton, but in the hope that I might find more about Shakespeare, which hope has not been satisfied.

All the more honour to Mrs. Stopes for sticking to her self-imposed task, and for piling up yet higher the debt of gratitude which all Shakespeare students owe her for her splendid work among Elizabethan records.

Notwithstanding all this, a legitimate inference from a study of Mrs. Stopes' book is that the working hypothesis with which she started was wrong.

I would not, of course, for one moment think of comparing my own amateur work in connection with Parish Registers and local histories with Mrs. Stopes' magnificent and valuable work among sixteenth- and seventeenth-century MSS.; but, if I can show any successful result

following the use of my particular working hypothesis, I think a fair inference to be drawn is that the hypothesis on which I am working is true, and that Mrs. Stopes' working hypothesis about Shakespeare—the orthodox one—is not true.

Before discussing my particular researches, it will be advisable at this point to give a short résumé of Oxford's career.

For the first thirty-eight years of his life (1550–1588) he led the life of a royal ward, courtier, poet and favourite of Queen Elizabeth.

In 1571 he married the daughter of Lord Burleigh, Anne Cecil, by whom he had three daughters, Elizabeth, Bridget and Susan, the first of whom was born in 1575 and the last in 1587. The Earl was one of the noblemen who possessed a company of players—the "Oxford Boys"—with whom he toured the provinces and acted in London at the Curtain Theatre, and doubtless also at Court. He bore the reputation of being one of the best writers of comedy of the time.

Fleay, in his *Chronicle of the London Stage* (p. 86) is of the opinion that the Earl of Oxford's players continued to act at the Curtain until 1588. After that date, at all events, they are no longer heard of. His wife,

"Anne Countess of Oxford died in Queen Elizabeth's Court the 6th of June 1588, and was honourably interred in Westminster Abbey on the 25th of the same month, attended by many Persons of great Quality and Honour." *

* Collins's *Noble Families*, p. 265.

A monument was erected by her father, Lord Burleigh, in the Chapel of St. Nicholas, Westminster Abbey, to her memory and to that of her mother, who died in the following year.

As the Earl of Oxford does not appear to have been present at the funeral of his wife, and had no share in the erection of the memorial, it is quite clear that some estrangement had occurred between the couple. Up to this date, 1588, there is no particular mystery about Oxford's life. But a complete change took place after the death of his first wife.

It is known that he subsequently married Elizabeth Trentham, one of the Maids of Honour of Queen Elizabeth, and that their son Henry, afterwards the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, was born in 1593, that he was summoned from his retirement to act as one of the judges at the trial of Essex in 1601, and that he died at Hackney on June 24, 1604.

So much is known. But this period of sixteen years, from 1588 to 1604, is, compared with the first period, one of complete retirement and obscurity.

The very date of his second marriage is unknown. This is in striking contrast to the first marriage, which took place in Westminster Abbey and was attended by Queen Elizabeth herself.

We may, therefore, conveniently divide Oxford's life into two periods, the Anne Cecil period up to 1588, a period of prominence and brilliancy, associated with the Court;

and, secondly, what we may call the Elizabeth Trentham period, from 1588 to 1604, spent in retirement and almost complete obscurity, this period of his life being associated principally with the neighbourhood of Hackney.

It is this second period that I have selected for investigation. Covering, as it does, the first period of Shakespearean publication, from the *Venus and Adonis* of 1593 to the authentic *Hamlet* Quarto of 1604, it includes what must be considered, *ex hypothesi*, the most productive period of Oxford's life. Investigation promised to be all the easier as it seemed to be confined to one locality.

This turned out to be the case, and as my first discovery was in connection with *The Sonnets*, a short description of the title, dedication and other details of the first edition is necessary at this point.

On May 20, 1609, "a book called *Shakespeares Sonnettes*" was entered on the Stationers' Register, and was shortly afterwards published in quarto, and priced at fivepence, with the following title-page :

SHAKE-SPEARES
SONNETS
Never before imprinted
AT LONDON
By *G.Eld* for *T.T.* and are to be solde by
WILLIAM ASPLEY.
1609.

The most cursory examination of the first edition of *The Sonnets* is sufficient to show that the book was published as a business venture, without the knowledge or permission of the author.

The very title, *Shake-speares Sonnets*, instead of *The Sonnets of William Shakespeare*, displays what Sir Sidney Lee characterizes as "a tradesman's collocation of words."

The dedication runs as follows:

TO. THE. ONLIE. BEGETTER. OF.
THESE. INSVING. SONNETS.
MR. W. H. ALL. HAPPINESSE.
AND. THAT. ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.
BY.
OVR. EVER-LIVING. POET.
WISHETH.
THE. WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTVRER. IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.

T.T.

Let us first endeavour to ascertain who "T.T." may have been, "the well-wishing adventurer," or hopeful speculator, who published or set forth "these insuing sonnets" in 1609.

These initials stand for Thomas Thorpe, the publisher, concerning whom the following details are taken from Sir

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.
THESE.INSVING.SONNETS.
Mr. W. H. ALL.HAPPINESSE.
AND.THAT.ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.

BY.

OVR.EVER-LIVING.POET.

WISHETH.

THE.WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTVRER.IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.

T. T.

DEDICATION OF THE SONNETS, 1609.

Sidney Lee's article on him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

In 1594 he took up the freedom of the Stationers' Company, and in the year 1600 he signed the dedication of Christopher Marlowe's *First Book of Lucan* to his friend in the trade, Edward Blount, one of Marlowe's intimate friends.

The dedication, which opens with the words: "Blunt, I purpose to be blunt with you," was a facetious one, the usually selected noble but niggardly patron coming in for some uncomplimentary remarks.

> Thorpe's energies [Sir Sidney Lee tells us] seem to have been mainly confined, as in his initial venture of Marlowe's *Lucan*, to the predatory work of procuring, no matter how, unpublished and neglected "copy." In the absence of any legal recognition of an author's right to control the publication of his work, the actual holder of a MS. was its lawful and responsible owner, no matter by what means it had fallen into his hands.

So much for "T.T.," or Thomas Thorpe.

Now for "Mr. W. H.," to whom the volume is dedicated as the "onlie begetter" of the sonnets, and on whose behalf T.T. wishes "all happinesse and that eternitie promised by our ever-living Poet."

Many conjectures have been hazarded as to who this mysterious "Mr. W. H." can have been. One of the points I hope to make in the following pages is the identification of this enigmatic personage. Some interpret the

mystery by referring the initials to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, others to Henry Wriothesley—the initials being reversed—Earl of Southampton.

Mrs. Stopes, however, pointed out long ago in her *Bacon–Shakspere Question*, 1888, that the dedication could not have been addressed to an Earl, " as it is not reverent enough."

Besides, these interpretations are based on the assumption that " onlie begetter " means " sole inspirer," and here again Mrs. Stopes points out that the verb " to beget " occurs in contemporary literature in the sense of " to get " or " to acquire," as for instance in Hamlet's instructions to the players :

> Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus ; but use all gently : for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and *beget* a temperance, that may give it smoothness.

Here the verb *to beget* is practically used as a synonym for *to acquire*. To quote Mrs. Stopes again, for a final summing-up, the dedication " refers only to the person who got the poems or collected them for the publisher, not to the inspirer or composer."

The following extracts from Sir Sidney Lee's article on Thomas Thorpe refer to " Mr. W. H."

> As in the case of Marlowe's *Lucan*, Thomas Thorpe selected for

patron of the volume a friend in the trade whom he denominated "Mr. W. H."

* * * * * *

An obscure stationer, William Hall, was at this period filling, like Thorpe, the irresponsible rôle of procurer of manuscripts. In 1606 Hall had procured for publication *A Foure-fold Meditation*, by Robert Southwell, and had supplied, as owner of the "copy," a dedicatory epistle under his initials "W. H."

Southwell's poem was printed for Hall by George Eld, the printer of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*.

In all probability, therefore, "Mr. W. H." was the stationer William Hall.*

Who, then, was Robert Southwell, whose poem, *A Foure-fold Meditation*, was published by Hall in 1606?

Again Sir Sidney Lee, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, is our authority.

He was a Jesuit missionary and writer, whose poems were a model for those of Crashaw in the seventeenth century, Percy Bysshe Shelley being a descendant of a younger branch of the family.

As his poem, *A Foure-fold Meditation*, is an important link in our chain of evidence, it is necessary here to give some details of his short and tragic career.

* The Rev. Walter Begley, in his *Is it Shakespeare?* (John Murray, 1903), is of Sir Sidney Lee's opinion in this matter. "'Mr. W. H.,'" he writes, "is only just possibly William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and may just as well be the Mr. W. Hall whom Mr. Sidney Lee brings forward—indeed, I think that the curiously coincident collocation of letters, Mr. *W. H. all* happinesse, etc., rather points in the direction Mr. Lee has aimed at" (p. 151).

He was born about 1560, and was sent to school at Douay. In his fifteenth year he went to Paris, where he studied under the Jesuit Thomas Darbyshire. In 1578 he was enrolled at Rome "amongst the children" destined to become Jesuits. In 1580 he was admitted to the first vows, and was made Prefect of Studies in the English College at Rome. In 1584 he was ordained priest and nominated to the English Mission. In 1585 an Act of Parliament, 27 Eliz., was passed. This Act laid it down that any Roman Catholic priest ordained since the first year of Queen Elizabeth's reign—1558—who should reside more than forty days in England, was guilty of treason and liable to suffer death.

In 1586 Robert Southwell set out for England accompanied by Father Henry Garnett, but his landing was reported by a spy to Sir Francis Walsingham, and he was closely watched.

He was welcomed at Lord Vaux's house at Hackney, and for six years he led the life of a fugitive, carrying his life in his hand, making use of many disguises, travelling under the name of Cotton, and using terms of falconry in his conversation in order to throw his pursuers off the scent, until at last he was arrested at Harrow in 1592.

For the next three years he was kept in prison at Westminster and in the Tower, being every now and then subjected to torture in the vain hope that he would betray

BROOKE HOUSE, HACKNEY, SOUTH VIEW, 1797.

Photo Albert Hester

his friends; and he was finally hanged at Tyburn on February 21, 1595. Lord Vaux, who had befriended him at Hackney, died in the same year.

After Robert Southwell's death many of his manuscript poems were at intervals brought to light, and gained a wide popularity. The MS. of one of these poems, *A Foure-fold Meditation*, fell into the hands of William Hall, who, as we have seen, published it in 1606, inserting on the title-page a dedicatory epistle under the initials " W. H."

An important link in our chain of evidence, to be noted at this stage of the investigation, is that it was at Lord Vaux's house at Hackney that Robert Southwell was hospitably received after landing in England in 1586.

In this connection a quotation may be made from p. 100 of the *History and Antiquities of the Parish of Hackney*, by William Robinson, LL.D., F.S.A., 1842, under the heading " Lord Vaux's House."

> Edward * Lord Vaux had a residence at Hackney at the latter end of the sixteenth century; but it is not known at this day the precise place where his house was situated. It is certain that his house was one in which the R.C. priests and Jesuits about the year 1592 practised their popish impositions to deceive the people.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> All that is known is that this Lord Vaux was for many years confined as a suspected person within a certain distance from

* A mistake. The name of the third Baron Vaux was William. (See *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol. lviii, p. 196.)

London; and it is conjectured that he hired a residence at Hackney (probably Brooke House), which is confirmed from the circumstance of his house at Hackney being mentioned * several times in a book printed in 1603 (published by James Roberts, dwelling in Barbican) entitled: *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures.*

We may therefore take it, in Dr. Robinson's opinion, as being highly probable that the well-known Elizabethan residence, Brooke House, was the harbour of refuge to which Robert Southwell was welcomed in 1586.†

The confirmation of this, that Dr. Robinson accepts from the frequent mention of Lord Vaux's house at Hackney in the *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, is probably due to the fact that a local tradition of a "priest's hole" or hiding-place has always connected itself with Brooke House.

The existence of this local tradition, together with another and most important piece of evidence connecting both the Earl and Countess of Oxford with Brooke House, are alluded to in the following quotations from a series of articles by the late Mr. Henry Blundell-Heath, contributed to the *Hackney Spectator* from February 22 to May 10, 1909, under the heading, "The Romance of Brooke House, Hackney."

* Pages 7, 11, 37, 82, 117, 131, 139, 193, 202, 203, 237, 246, 251, 254, 261, 267, 268, 269.

† See Appendix A.

After giving the early history of the old manor, which passed into the possession of Henry VIII in 1538, when it became known as King's Place, our author informs us that that monarch held a Court there in 1546, Edward VI doing the same in 1549, followed by Queen Elizabeth in 1583. At that date the house was in the possession of Sir Rowland Hayward. It next passed into the hands of Anthony Radcliffe.

Mr. Blundell-Heath goes on to say :

The next change was in 1596, when the mansion, having been in the hands of Anthony Radcliffe and others, considered to be Hayward's executors, is by them transferred to Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, who came into residence with another widow, Lady Catherine Vaux.

* * * * * *

Very little is known of the circumstances under which these ladies resided at King's Place. They were undoubtedly Popish recusants, for we find Lord Vaux frequently prosecuted for not attending the Reformed Church, and he was repeatedly imprisoned and fined.

The probability is that, as the Countess of Oxford was in possession of the dwelling and had means, she offered accommodation to Lady Vaux, who was allowed to live with her unmolested An incident (previously alluded to in Mr. Blundell-Heath's narrative) referring to the Jesuit Edmund Campion gives colour to the story about the " priest's hole " or hiding-place, which is one of the traditions of Brooke House.

With regard to the Countess of Oxford, she appears to have had troublesome servants. The Middlesex Session Rolls throw light upon this.

On May 17th (2 James I—i.e. in 1604) a true bill is found that at Hackney in the dwelling house of the Most Noble the Earl of Oxford certain persons robbed Agnes Thomas of various garments and money. Sentenced to be hung. Again, on October 19th (4 James I—i.e. in 1606) the recognizance is taken of John Freeon of Hackney, gentleman, servant to the Countess of Oxford, to appear at the next gaol delivery to witness against Rose Jones committed on suspicion of a felony done to the said Countess.

The foregoing quotation contains evidence of the occupation of King's Place by the Earl of Oxford on May 17, 1604, just a month before his death, and we know from *Shakespeare Identified*, p. 239, where the Hatfield MSS., vol. xii, are quoted, that he was writing to Sir Robert Cecil from Hackney on March 22, 1601.

Probably, therefore, the house was occupied from 1596 both by the Earl and Countess, the mention of the name of the Countess alone as the incoming tenant in 1596 being possibly due to some provision in the marriage settlement.

Her father, Sir Thomas Trentham, of Rocester, Staffordshire, was a wealthy man, his father having been granted the lands of the Abbey at Rocester by Henry VIII on the dissolution of the monasteries. In any case, Mr. Blundell-Heath is clearly mistaken in speaking of the Countess of Oxford as a widow in 1596.

The following quotation is from a MS. *History of Hackney*, by John Thomas, 1832, under the heading " Brooke House " :

In 1596 this Manor with the Capital Mansion was conveyed by Anthony Ratcliffe and others to Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, who in 1609 alienated it with 4 Messuages, 2 Cottages, 2 Tofts, etc., 100 acres of Land, 50 of meadow, 100 of pasture, and 20 of wood in the Parishes of Hackney and Tottenham to Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke, his heirs and assigns.

It is at this point that the clue suggesting *The Sonnets* comes in. It was on May 20, 1609, that "a book called *Shakespeares Sonnettes*" was entered on the Stationers' Register, and it was in 1609, according to Thomas, that the Countess of Oxford alienated Brooke House—or King's Place, as it was then called—to Fulke Greville.

The date, 1609, is so important in this connection that any further evidence as to Lady Oxford's affairs at this time is very desirable. A reference to Morant's *History of Essex*, vol. ii, p. 295, supplies a further link in the chain. From his account of the de Vere property of Castle-Hedingham, in that county, we find that Lady Oxford's brother, Francis Trentham, advanced £10,000 "to clear incumbrances on the Oxford Estates. In consideration whereof, 8 July, 1609, by deed inrolled," etc., etc. Oxford's three daughters by his first wife conveyed Castle-Hedingham to their step-mother, the Countess-Dowager.

We are now in a position to recapitulate the relevant and probable facts before going on to any inferences from those facts.

For greater clearness let us put them down in chronological order and tabular form.

1586–1592. Robert Southwell, a Jesuit, author of the poem *A Foure-fold Meditation,* published after his death, is at intervals welcomed by Lord Vaux at his house in Hackney. This house, according to Robinson, was probably King's Place.

1595. Death of Lord Vaux.
Execution of Robert Southwell.

1596. Occupation of King's Place by Lady Vaux, by the Countess—and doubtless also by the Earl—of Oxford.

1604. Death of the Earl of Oxford at Hackney.

1606. William Hall procures for publication Robert Southwell's *Foure-fold Meditation.*

1609. Sale of King's Place, and purchase of Castle-Hedingham by Lady Oxford.
William Hall procures for publication a "book called *Shakespeares Sonnettes,*" entered on the Stationers' Register on May 20th. Thomas Thorpe publishes *The Sonnets,* dedicating them in an intimate and friendly way to a fellow publisher, whom he addresses as "Mr. W. H.," wishing him "all happinesse and that eternitie promised by our ever-living Poet."

What inferences may we draw from these facts?

Working as we are on the hypothesis stated at the commencement of this chapter, that the Earl of Oxford was the author of *The Sonnets*, it may surely be inferred with some confidence that the general clearing-up of the

Oxford affairs in 1609, including the sale of King's Place, when an inventory was made of its contents, brought the MS. of these poems to light.

A second inference which may be drawn from the Dedication of *The Sonnets* is that the author was not living at the time of their publication. " Our ever-living Poet " * is, as Mr. Looney has pointed out in *Shakespeare Identified*, p. 419, a phrase only used of a man after he is actually dead.

If this inference be accepted, all other known claimants to the authorship of *The Sonnets* are put out of court ; for William Shakspere the actor, the Earls of Rutland, Derby and Southampton, as well as Sir Walter Raleigh and Francis Bacon, were all living in 1609.

A third inference is that William Hall, who was the procurer of *The Sonnets*, as well as of the *Foure-fold Meditation*, probably obtained both MSS. from King's Place.

A fourth inference is that William Hall had probably some local connection with Hackney, and may very well have been a Hackney man.

A fifth inference, which may be drawn from the Dedication of *The Sonnets*, is that William Hall had been recently married.

Mrs. Stopes, in her biography of *The Third Earl of Southampton*, p. 344, makes the very plausible suggestion that " all happinesse and that eternitie promised by our

* See Appendix B.

ever-living Poet," reads very like a wedding wish, the particular eternity promised in many of the sonnets * being the eternity to be gained by leaving posterity behind to carry on one's name and memory.

Although I had not up to this time consulted the actual Hackney Parish Registers, as the extracts given in Robinson's *History of Hackney* gave the dates of death both of the Earl and Countess of Oxford, I felt that my search would not be complete without consulting the original Registers on the offchance of their containing the name of a William Hall who might have been the " onlie begetter " or procurer of the MS. of *The Sonnets* in 1609.

In order, therefore, to leave no stone unturned in the matter, I examined the Registers one afternoon after a long morning spent in the Central Library, Hackney, where the Chief Librarian, Mr. T. Aldred, had courteously placed at my disposal all the MSS. and printed books dealing with local history. The MS. notes contained extracts from the old Registers, with occasional remarks, such as the following :

A.D. 1590, were 23 marriages, none of note.

* * * * * *

1607. 22 marriages, 38 Xtnings and 38 burials.

1608. 25 marriages, S^{r} R^{d} Lovelace Kt. & Marg^{t} Dodworth, Jn^{o} Brewster of the Temple & Lady Deane Widow.

40 Xtnings. Nath^{l} son of S^{r} Jn^{o} Rae Kt.

71 burials, etc., etc.

* See Sonnets I, VI, XII, XIII, XIV, etc.

The chance of finding William Hall was so slight that I very nearly contented myself with the extracts contained in the Library, but decided at last to go to the church so as to satisfy my mind that everything possible had been done to find " Mr. W. H."

I emphasize the fact that I went to the Registers to find a definite individual to fit a particular case, because a successful find under such circumstances is more valuable as evidence than a chance discovery, for the reason that it tends to confirm the hypothesis on the strength of which the search was being conducted, namely, in this case, that *The Sonnets* had been found at King's Place, and that William Hall was a Hackney man.

Judge, therefore, of my delight when I came across the following entry :

William Hall and Margery Gryffyn were joyned in matrymonye on the 4th Aug. 1608.

The verger, Mr. George Merle, who helped me to look through the voluminous list of names, was no less interested and hardly less pleased than I was at the swift and dramatic success of the search.

It was, however, some time before I fully realized the import of this discovery. I have since searched some twenty odd volumes of the Harleian Society's *Reprints of Registers of London Parishes*, as well as *Marriage Licenses, London*, 1520–1610, *Marriage Licenses Granted by the*

Faculty Office, etc., etc., and the only William Halls who were either born, married, or died at a time to fit the case of " Mr. W. H." are the following :

St. Michael's, Cornhill. William Hall, son of George, bapt. Jan. 15, 1570.

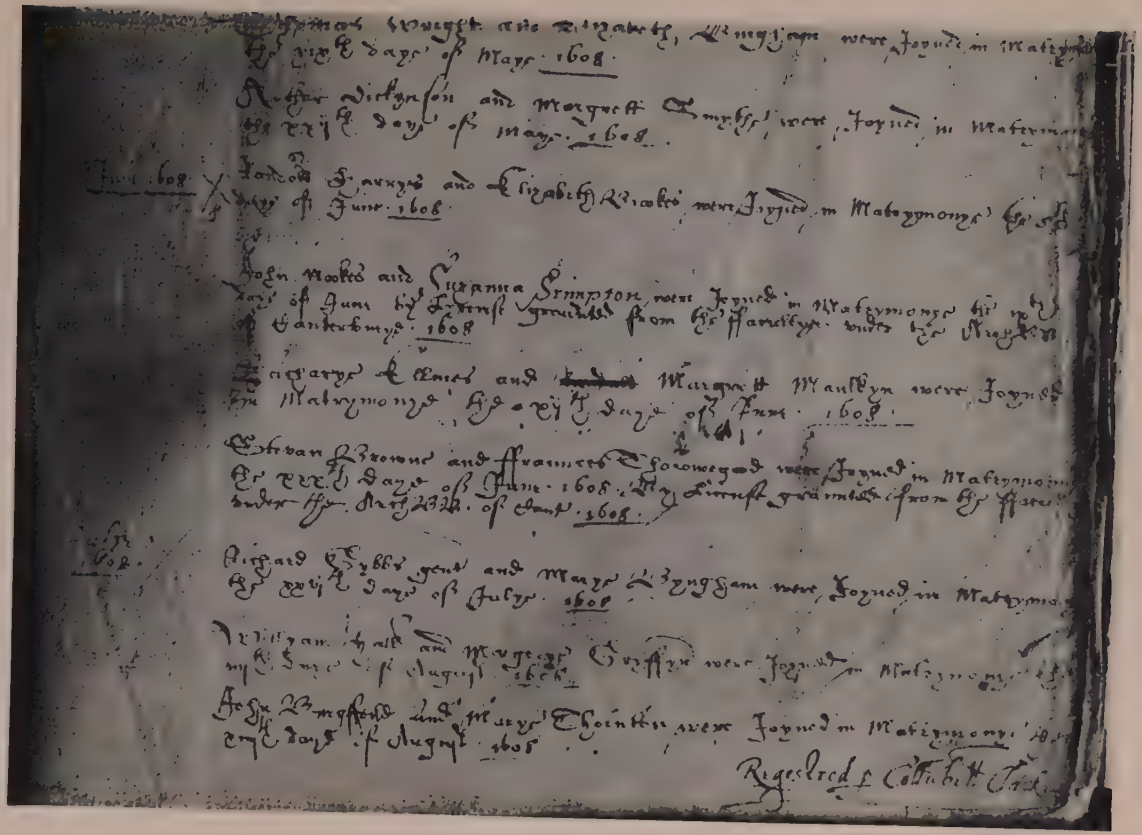
St. James', Clerkenwell. William Hall, married Margaret Townley, 1593.
William Hall, buried July 22, 1625.
William Hall, buried July 19, 1636.

Any one of these entries may refer to our William Hall. If the second entry refers to him, Margery Gryffyn must have been his second wife, and either of the two burials may also refer to him.

Two important points should, however, be noticed. First, that no entry so completely fulfils all the conditions as the record of the marriage of William Hall to Margery Gryffyn at Hackney on August 4, 1608. And secondly, that my theory or working hypothesis guided me straight to the right Parish Register.

The " book called *Shakespeares Sonnettes* " was entered on the Stationers' Register on May 20, 1609. William Hall had been married just nine months before. What more suitable wedding present for him than the volume of sonnets which open with the quatrain :

> From fairest creatures we desire increase
> That thereby beauty's *Rose* might never die,
> But as the riper should by time decease,
> His tender heir might bear his memory ?



MARRIAGE OF WILLIAM HALL, 1608.

Photo Albert Hester.

And what more suitable wedding wish than the one inscribed on the page just preceding this very sonnet :

To Mr. W. H. all happinesse
And that eternitie
Promised
By
Our ever-living Poet ?

There are other inferences to be drawn later on from the facts set down in this chapter, some of them of even greater weight and importance as regards the question of Shakespearean authorship than those I have drawn from the facts known about William Hall.

Meanwhile the value of the hypothesis which led to my discovery on the 12th July 1922 of the marriage of William Hall to Margery Gryffyn has, I suggest, been sufficiently demonstrated to make it worthy of further application on the part of searchers amongst Elizabethan records.

In conclusion, I cannot but think that a careful weighing of the evidence now brought forward will result in a powerful reinforcement of the case so ably put forward by Mr. Looney in his *Shakespeare Identified*, that not only the sonnets but also the great majority of the plays are in all probability the work of the Earl of Oxford.

CHAPTER II

EDWARD DE VERE AND WILLIAM SHAKSPERE— A DUAL MYSTERY

" What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in pilèd stones ?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid ?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name ?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument."

JOHN MILTON, 1630.

" Thou art a monument without a tomb."

BEN JONSON, 1623.

" Stay, Passenger, why goest thou by so fast ?
Read, if thou canst, whom envious Death hath plast
Within this monument."

From the Shakespeare monument, on the north wall of the chancel in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Stratford-on-Avon.*

IN the previous chapter I described the various steps which led to the discovery of the marriage of William Hall

* The tomb, which bears no name, is marked by a slab on the floor of the chancel. It is quite separate from the monument.

to Margery Gryffyn at Hackney on August 4, 1608. The discovery itself was the final link in a long and complicated chain of circumstantial evidence, the cumulative effect of which was to confirm the supposition on the strength of which the search had been conducted. The supposition was that the Earl of Oxford was the author of *The Sonnets*, the original MS. of which had been found at King's Place when the house was sold and Lady Oxford's effects cleared out of it in 1609.

Incidentally, the discovery proved the correctness of Sir Sidney Lee's contention that William Hall was the " Mr. W. H." of the Dedication of *The Sonnets*. It confirmed Mrs. Stopes' theory as to the meaning of " that eternitie promised by our ever-living Poet " ; and it may even be said to have added weight to Mr. Looney's opinion that " our ever-living Poet " is the kind of expression invariably reserved for the dead—if, indeed, any discovery can be said to add weight to so obvious a proposition.

Two important inferences may be drawn from a consideration of the Dedication, apart from any outside evidence at all.

First, that the author of *The Sonnets* was no longer living, and secondly, that his personality was an open secret, or at all events that Thomas Thorpe, the publisher, knew all about it, and thought others did so too.

The words " ever-living Poet " point, as we have seen, to someone already dead, and the natural way in which the phrase slips into its place in the Dedication seems almost to indicate that Thorpe was unconsciously giving away the secret without intending to do so.

If this is the case, his action is very like that of the poet, Robert Greene, who in 1592 protested against " an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers " . . . who " is, in his owne conceit, the onlie Shake-scene in a countrie " ; the obvious difference being that Greene was attacking William Shakspere the actor consciously, for appearing in borrowed plumes, whereas Thorpe was unconsciously charging him with the same offence.

As all the known claimants to the authorship of *The Sonnets*, except Edward de Vere, were living in 1609, the Dedication may be said in itself to contain indications of all the facts necessary for the solution of the problem of Shakespearean authorship.

There are, however, certain important facts, other than those bearing on the Dedication, which must now be set down and examined.

The first of these facts—first, that is, in point of historical order, as well, indeed, as being the first find I actually came across in the course of my investigations—is given in the following extract from the Parish Register of Stoke Newington.

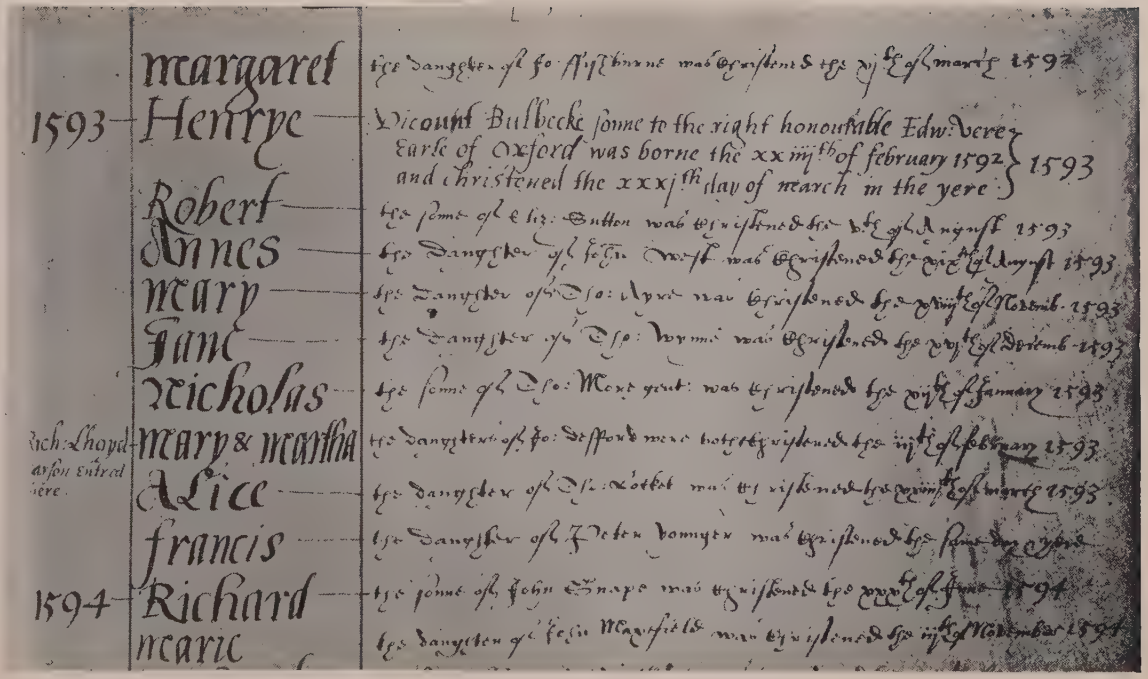


Photo Albert Hester.

BIRTH OF HENRY DE VERE, 1593.

1593 Henrye, Vicount Bulbecke sonne to the right honourable Edw. Vere Earle of Oxford was borne the XXIIIIth of february 1592 * and christened the XXXIst day of march in the yere 1593.

As Stoke Newington and Hackney are adjacent parishes, it is clear that from the time of his second marriage, that is to say, not later than early in 1592, the Earl of Oxford was living in the neighbourhood of Hackney.

The other facts, all of which were alluded to in the last chapter, are as follows :

1596 Occupation of King's Place by Lord and Lady Oxford.
1604 Death of the Earl of Oxford and burial in Hackney Church.
1609 Sale of King's Place by Lady Oxford.
1612 Death of Lady Oxford and burial in Hackney Church.

The most important single fact in the above list is, without doubt, the sale of King's Place—now known as Brooke House—in 1609. This fact was alluded to in the last chapter, in connection with the publication of *The Sonnets*, but as other important inferences may be drawn from it, it will be advisable at this point to concentrate all the evidence bearing on the question.

Thomas, in his MS. *History of Hackney*, 1832, is the original authority I have come across for the statement

* O.S.

that King's Place was conveyed by Anthony Ratcliffe and others to Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, in 1596, and that in 1609 she alienated it with some 270 acres of land to Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke.

Other transactions that took place in the year 1609 are given in the following extracts from Morant's *History of Essex*, vol. ii, page 295 :

> Edward, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, having taken to his second wife Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Trentham, of Rocester, in Staffordshire; her brother, *Francis Trentham*, Esq., advanced ten thousand pounds to clear incumbrances on the Oxford Estates.
>
> In consideration whereof, 8 July, 1609, by deed inrolled, and recovery suffered pursuant thereto, the three daughters of the said Earl Edward, by his first wife, with their husbands, William Earl of Derby, Francis Lord Norris, and Philip Earl of Montgomery, by the appointment of the forementioned Elizabeth Vere, Countess dowager of Oxford, conveyed the Honor of Castle Hedingham to her for life, remainder to her son Henry Earl of Oxford for his life, and to his sons in taile male; remainder to Trustees to perform contingent estates, remainder to *Francis Trentham*, Esq., brother of the said Countess, and his heirs for ever.

The reason for this purchase of Castle-Hedingham by Lady Oxford is given by Morant as follows (*History of Essex*, vol. ii, p. 293). Castle-Hedingham had been sold by Edward the seventeenth Earl :

> but it was repurchased by his wife, or rather widow, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Trentham, Esq., who got a private act in

1609 to sell the maner of Bretts, and farm at Plaistow in West Ham, about £200 a year, for that purpose.

A sidelight on the preliminary negotiations is given in the following précis of a letter from Sir Henry Maynard to Salisbury (Robert Cecil). See *State Papers, Domestic*, 1603–1610, p. 522 :

> Trusts that he will not disapprove of his not yielding to the Countess in the business of Herringham, (*sic*) though the young Earl, Mr. Trentham his uncle, and the Countess herself, earnestly pressed his giving up the bargain.

The above extract refers to June 1609, while negotiations were still in progress, but as we have already seen, the business of the repurchase of Castle-Hedingham was definitely settled in July of that year.

The " Inquisitio post mortem " held on Edward de Vere is dated August 1608. It refers to his property in London, and shows that he was owner of the Gate House and of land at Covent Garden and St. Botolph's outside Aldgate. The original is in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, and is numbered Chancery Series 2, Vol. 305, No. 103.

From the foregoing extracts it is clear that the years 1608–09 saw the winding up of the affairs of the seventeenth Earl, and the giving up of the house where he had spent the last eight years of his life (1596–1604).

Another fact that emerges from a consideration of the

above details is that in these business transactions we see the Dowager Countess and the young Earl on the one side, assisted by Francis Trentham; and Elizabeth, Bridget, and Susan, the three daughters of Edward, the seventeenth Earl, together with their husbands, the Earl of Derby, Lord Norris, and the Earl of Montgomery, acting together on the other side.

Before going on to the inferences which may be drawn from these facts, it will be necessary to consider briefly the history of the " Shakespeare " publications.

From 1593 when *Venus and Adonis* was first published, down to 1604, when the 2nd quarto edition of *Hamlet* appeared, there was a continuous stream of Shakespearean publication. In this period of eleven years two long poems and thirteen plays were given to the world. Then occurred a break of four years, when a quarto edition of *King Lear* was published in 1608; *Troilus*, *Pericles*, and *The Sonnets* coming out in 1609.

This revival of publication in 1608–09, which—be it noted in passing—coincides in point of time with the winding up of Lord Oxford's affairs, was followed after an interval of thirteen years by the publication of *Othello* in 1622, and by the First Folio of 1623, when all the plays were collected in one edition, twenty of them being then published for the first time.

We have already seen that the Earl of Oxford was in

the neighbourhood of Hackney in 1592, and that he probably lived there continuously until his death in 1604, a period that coincides almost exactly with the first great period of Shakespearean publication.

The revival of publication occurs at the time of the clearing up of the Oxford affairs in 1608–09, when King's Place was given up and Castle-Hedingham repurchased.

Another point to notice here is that Burbage's playhouse, the Theatre, where the Shakespeare plays were first staged, as well as the Curtain, where the " Oxford Boys " acted up to 1588, were both in Shoreditch, in the immediate neighbourhood of Hackney.

There are, therefore, four coincidences to bear in mind at this point.

1st. The beginning of the first period of Shakespearean publication (1593) coincides very closely with Oxford's arrival at Hackney.

2nd. The end of the first period of Shakespearean publication (1604) coincides with Oxford's death at King's Place.

3rd. The second period of Shakespearean publication (1608–09) occurs simultaneously with the sale of King's Place and the general clearing up of the Oxford affairs.

4th. King's Place, Hackney, is within easy reach of the Theatre and the Curtain, both of which playhouses were at Shoreditch.

Another set of coincidences concerns William Shakspere, the Stratford man. There is no direct evidence of his having been in London at all until 1592–3. In 1592 Robert Greene wrote his attack on " Shake-scene," and in 1593 Shakspere lodged at St. Helen's, Bishopsgate. This is the period of the publication of *Venus and Adonis*, when the name of William Shakespeare made its first appearance in English literature. After this he disappears for a time —even the tax-gatherers could not find him—and re-appears in 1596, lodging at Southwark, near the Bear Garden. This is the precise time when steps were being taken to establish him at Stratford. In the following year he purchased New Place for £60. Two years later, when *Love's Labour's Lost* was published with the name William Shakespeare on the title-page, he was evidently immersed in business at Stratford. From this time till 1604–5 was his busiest Stratford period ; he was in the very thick of the work of establishing himself there.

Oxford died in July 1604, and in November of that year Shakspere " laye in the house " of Mr. Mountjoy in Silver Street.

This would appear to have been a temporary visit, for on July 24, 1605, he laid out the large sum of £440—between two and three thousand pounds of modern money—in the purchase of Stratford tithes.

In 1608–09 the Trenthams were straightening out matters,

and in April 1610 he rounded off his Stratford estates by the payment of a fine of £100 to William and John Combe in respect of certain purchases of land at Stratford.

In December 1612 the Dowager Countess of Oxford died, and in the following year, March 10, 1613, Shakspere paid £140 for a house in Blackfriars.

It will be seen that every one of the outstanding Shakspere purchases took place immediately after the critical Oxford-Trentham dates ; from his purchase of New Place, the largest house in Stratford, in the spring of 1597, to " his last investment in real estate " in 1613.

All these various coincidences can be best appreciated by making a chronological list of them by periods of three consecutive years, noting under each period :

(1) Oxford-Trentham events.
(2) Notes on Shakespearean publications.
(3) William Shakspere's movements and purchases.

First take the period 1591–1593.

(1) Oxford's residence in the neighbourhood of Hackney begins.

(2) William Shakespeare's name first appears in English literature under the Dedication of *Venus and Adonis ;* and first great period of Shakespearean publication begins (1593).

(3) Robert Greene's attack on Shake-scene (1592), William Shakspere at St. Helen's, Bishopsgate (1593).

Next take the period 1596–1598.

(1) Oxford's occupation of King's Place (1596).

(2) The name William Shakespeare first appears on a play: *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598).

(3) William Shakspere at Southwark near the Bear Garden (1596). He purchases New Place, at Stratford for £60 (1597).

Period 1603–1605.

(1) Death of Oxford at Hackney (July 1604).

(2) It is generally agreed that the last of *The Sonnets* was written shortly after the death of Queen Elizabeth (March 1603). Sonnet No. 125, perhaps the latest of all in date of composition, beginning:

125

> Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
> With my extern the outward honouring,

probably refers to the Royal funeral,* where Oxford's place as Lord High Chamberlain of England would have certainly been amongst the six Earls who "bore the canopy" over the wax figure of the Queen, shown on Camden's engraving of the funeral procession. Publication of 2nd quarto of *Hamlet* and first great period of Shakespearean publication ends (1604).

(3) William Shakspere "laye in the house" of Mr. Mountjoy in Silver Street, Cheapside (November 1604), and purchases Stratford tithes for £440 (July 1605).

* See Appendix D.

The Charrett Drawne by 4 Horses vppō
w^ch Charrett stood the Coffin Covered w^th purple
velvet & vppō that the vpresentation. The Canopy
borne by 6 Knights
Gentlemen penthoners.

FUNERAL OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, 1603.

Photo Albert Hester.

Period 1608–1610.

(1) Lady Oxford—Elizabeth Trentham—alienates King's Place to Fulke Greville (1609).

(2) Revival of Shakespearean publications: *King Lear* (1608), *The Sonnets*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Pericles*, all in 1609.

(3) William Shakspere rounds off his Stratford purchases by a payment of £100 (April 1610).

Period 1612–1614.

(1) Death of Lady Oxford (December 1612).

(2) A second edition of *England's Helicon* is published (1614) containing fourteen new "Ignoto"* poems, in addition to eleven others which had been previously published in the first edition (1600).

(3) William Shakspere purchases a house in Blackfriars for £140 (March 1613).

A consideration of the foregoing coincidences tends to strengthen the view that the life histories of Oxford and William Shakspere mutually depend on one another; and that the dual mystery of Oxford's life on the one hand and of Shakspere's life on the other hand tends to become less mysterious when the two are considered together.

To prove that William Shakspere's life is a mystery, it

* Probably a pseudonym of the Earl of Oxford.—See Mr. Looney's *Poems of Edward de Vere*, pp. liii–lix.

is not necessary to go beyond Exhibit No. 91 at the Museum at Stratford. This exhibit shows that his daughter Judith signified her agreement to a deed of sale by making her mark.

That Oxford's life, or at all events the second portion of it, is mysterious must be obvious to anyone who endeavours to unravel it. To begin with, no date of his second marriage has yet been found, and a thorough search at Somerset House has failed to discover any trace of a will.

All this is in striking harmony with the following very definite expressions scattered about in *The Sonnets :*

> I, once gone, to all the world must die. (81)
>
> My name be buried where my body is. (72)
>
> No longer mourn for me when I am dead
> Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
> Give warning to the world that I am fled
> From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell :
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Do not so much as my poor name rehearse. (71)
>
> The earth can yield me but a common grave. (81)

This last quotation is strikingly confirmed by a statement in the will of his second wife, Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Oxford.*

The will was drawn up on November 25, 1612, some six weeks before her death, and she desires

* See Appendix C.

to be buried in the Church of Hackney within the County of Middlesex as near unto the bodie of my said late deare and noble lorde and husband as maye bee, and that to be done as privately and with as little pomp and ceremonie as possible maye bee. Onlie I will that there bee in the said church erected for us a tombe fittinge our degree and of such chardge as shall seem good to myne Executors hereafter named.

Edward de Vere had died eight years before, and yet no memorial had been erected over him.

The executors of Lady Oxford's will were Sir Edward Moore, Francis Trentham, and John Wright.

The Parish Register of St. Augustine's Church, Hackney, records that the

Lady Elizabeth Countess Dowager of Oxenford was buryed the 3rd day of Januarye 1612–13,

so that doubtless the executors carried out the provisions of the will so far as concerned the burial in the church, but it does not appear that they took any steps to give effect to her wish that "a tombe fittinge our degree" should be erected over them.

Hackney, once a country village containing many houses belonging to noble families in Elizabethan and Jacobean times, has long since lost its distinctive entity owing to the expansion of London during the last 150 years. By the year 1790 the Church of St. Augustine was unable to accommodate the extra population, and an Act of Parliament (30 Geo. III, c. 71) was passed for taking down the old

church and tower and for building another. In the following year the new church was commenced, and was completed in 1797.

Robinson in his *History of Hackney*, Vol. II, published in 1842, tells us what followed :

> The ancient fabric of St. Augustine was taken down in the year 1798, except the old tower, which still remains on the east side of the High Street.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Along the frieze of the gallery there was an inscription purporting that the church was repaired in the year 1720.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> The monument of Lady Latimer, who died in 1582, with inscriptions, was remaining in the north aisle of the old church when it was taken down ; fragments of which, together with the effigy of Lady Latimer, in a dilapidated state, are now (1842) under the old tower, a place used as a toolhouse by the sexton, concealed beneath dirt and rubbish.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> The church, before its demolition, was extremely rich in monuments, some of which, being considered worth preserving, were taken down and put up in the porches or vestibules of the new Church of St. John. In most Christian countries the inscriptions or epitaphs on the monuments, erected to perpetuate the memory of the dead, are carefully preserved and registered in their church books ; but in *England* they are (to the shame of our time, be it said) *broken down* and almost utterly *destroyed* and their *brass inscriptions* erased, torn away and pilfered ; by which the memory of many virtuous and noble persons deceased is extinguished, and the true understanding of families is darkened, as

the course of their inheritance is thereby in a great measure interrupted.

The ancient monuments, brasses, and inscriptions, which were formerly the pride and ornament of the old Church of *St. Augustine* have suffered by the taste for modern improvements; and most of them are scattered abroad, and not to be found but in the private collections of individuals, and placed against the walls of passages leading to conservatories and other places of recreation and amusement.

Robinson provides a plan of the old church showing the positions of all the memorials, so far as they could be ascertained in 1842. No record is given on this plan of any memorial to the Earl or Countess of Oxford. In order to verify Robinson's plan, I made a thorough search on the 13th September, 1922, through the large collection of sketches, plans and elevations of the old church, which are preserved in the Central Public Library at Hackney. Several of these drawings contain lists of the memorials in the church, as well as representations of the memorials themselves. I was assisted in my search by Mr. A. Walrond Clarke, the chief living authority on the history of Hackney. We were unable to find a single reference either to the Earl or Countess of Oxford. In any case it would seem to be unlikely that any memorial—had it existed in the church—would have been either destroyed or entirely lost sight of when the old church was pulled down, and some of the memorials removed first to the tower and afterwards to the new Church of St. John.

It would seem to be most likely that the executors of Lady Oxford's will, knowing what the Earl's wishes were, refrained from erecting any memorial to mark the exact spot where eight years before he had been laid to rest.

We can at least be thankful that the old tower from which " the surly sullen bell " tolled for the funeral of Edward de Vere is still standing ; and we may feel confident that instructions were given by the executors of his wife's will that she should be laid within the area of the old church, by the side of her husband, thus echoing the words of Cæsar on hearing of the death of Cleopatra :

> She shall be buried by her Antony.

To which now, after a lapse of over three centuries, we may surely add :

> No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
> A pair so famous.

Of Edward de Vere it may indeed be said, as Mecænas said of Antony :

> His taints and honours
> Wag'd equal with him.

But, as Agrippa finely replied :

> A rarer spirit never
> Did steer humanity ; but you, gods, will give us
> Some faults to make us men.

CHAPTER III

THE PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST FOLIO

" Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time !
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm ;
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines ! "

BEN JONSON, 1623.

THE year 1623 is a memorable one in the world's history, for it was during that year that William Jaggard, at his printing office near St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet Street, in the City of London, was hard at work on the production of one of the most famous books that ever issued from the Press—the First Folio of the Plays of William Shakespeare.

He was associated in the work with his son Isaac, and with two publishers, William Aspley, who in 1609 had been responsible for the issue of half the copies of Thorpe's impression of *The Sonnets*, and John Smethwick, who had previously published two late editions of *Romeo and Juliet* and one of *Hamlet*.

A fifth partner in the enterprise was Edward Blount, to whom, in association with Isaac Jaggard, the Stationers' Company issued a formal licence dated the 8th November, 1623, to proceed with the publication of the famous volume.

Now that we are at the commencement of the tercentenary year, it may be of interest to lovers of Shakespeare to see how the posthumous publication of 1623 fits in with the theory of the de Vere authorship of the Plays.

In Chapter I. attention was concentrated on the discovery in the Hackney Parish Register of the marriage of William Hall to Margery Gryffyn on the 4th August, 1608.

The search for William Hall in the Registry was made on the supposition that he had obtained the MS. of *The Sonnets* from King's Place when Lady Oxford moved out of the house in 1609 ; and the success of the search furnished evidence of the truth of the hypothesis on which it had been conducted. In Chapter II. attention was directed to the critical date, 1609, and emphasis was laid on the fact that not only *The Sonnets*, but also *King Lear*, *Troilus*, and *Pericles*, were all published at about the same time. This furnished further circumstantial evidence connecting Oxford with the second period of Shakespearean publication (1608–09).

Further on in the same chapter it was pointed out that the first period of Shakespearean publication (1593–1604) corresponded almost exactly with Oxford's life in retirement at Hackney.

All the foregoing may be called Oxford-Trentham dates, occurring as they do either during the married life or widowhood of Elizabeth Trentham.

The Shakespearean publications of 1608–09 have all the appearance of being unauthorised and piratical. Sir Sidney Lee says that " Butter's edition of *King Lear* followed a badly transcribed playhouse copy, and abounds in gross typographical errors." He alludes to *Troilus and Cressida* as being " obviously stolen wares," and suggests that *Pericles* was " derived from the notes of an irresponsible shorthand reporter of a performance in the theatre."

The Sonnets are not only seen to have been published without any authorisation, but the publisher, " T.T.," seems to be unconsciously giving away the secret of their authorship, obviously, however, without intending to do anything of the kind.

It would, therefore, seem to be clear that Elizabeth Trentham's responsibility for their publication does not extend beyond the orders she must have given to have King's Place cleared out before handing it over to Fulke Greville. She herself was evidently not intrusted with any responsibility in the matter. Besides, the small number of MSS. found in the house—three Plays and *The Sonnets*—would seem to indicate that the mass of the Shakespearean MSS., including, no doubt, most of the twenty plays which were published for the first time in the Folio Edition of

1623, must have been sent away from King's Place by Oxford before his death in 1604. With regard to this mass of unpublished material, the pirated edition of *Troilus and Cressida* furnishes an interesting reference. *Troilus* is the first case of a Shakespeare play being provided with a Preface.

The Preface is headed :

" A never writer to an ever reader. News,"

and begins thus :

" Eternall reader, you have heere a new play, never stal'd with the stage, never clapper-clawd with the palmes of the vulgar."

This claim, it may be stated in passing, was false. The whole object of the Preface is to excite interest in a novelty, and to urge people to buy.

The last sentences of the Preface are as follows :

" Amongst all (his Comedies) there is none more witty than this : And had I time I would comment upon it, though I know it needs not, (for so much as will make you thinke your testerne well bestowd) but for so much worth, as even poore I know to be stuft in it. It deserves such a labour, as well as the best Commedy in Terence or Plautus. And believe this, that when hee is gone, and his Commedies out of sale, you will scramble for them, and set up a new English Inquisition. Take this for a warning, and at the perill of your pleasures losse, and Judgements, refuse not, nor like this the lesse, for not being sullied with the smoaky breath of the multitude ; but thank fortune for the scape it hath made amongst you. Since by the grand possessors wills I beleeve

you should have prayd for them rather than been prayd. And so I leave all such to be prayd for (for the states of their wits healths) that will not praise it.
Vale."

This Preface to *Troilus*, besides being a bid for buyers, seems also to indicate that the Play was regarded as a lucky and somewhat illicit find ; the accidental unearthing of what the publishers believed to be an unknown document. They were evidently ignorant of the fact that it had been entered on the Stationers' Register in 1602.

At the close of the Preface the public are congratulated on the scape that *Troilus* had made amongst them, and are warned that the " grand possessors " will require a lot of persuasion before they consent to any further publication.

Sir Sidney Lee suggests that " the grand possessors " are the theatrical owners, but surely this is a very far-fetched idea. That a publisher should look upon a theatrical owner as a magnate seems highly improbable. The " grand possessors " are surely aristocrats.

The most likely literary executor for Oxford to have selected is, I suppose most people would agree, his son-in-law Derby. Professor Abel Lefranc's *Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare* has rescued this nobleman from the comparative oblivion of a two-line notice in the *Dictionary of National Biography* to the position of a candidate for Shakespearean honours whose claim at this moment stands

higher than any other on the Continent of Europe. The book was brought out somewhat earlier than Mr. Looney's *Shakespeare Identified*, and anyone who will take the trouble to read it through will have no difficulty in understanding the absolute confidence with which Professor Lefranc put forward his case.

I think it may fairly be described as the first sane way hitherto discovered of getting round the " formidable significance " of Mark Twain's " deadly fact " that William Shakspere " hadn't any history to record." For more than thirty years Professor Lefranc had been thinking of the Shakespearean question, the authorship of *The Tempest* being the particular problem which, to his mind, seemed the most difficult one to solve on orthodox lines.

Here was a play written and acted in the time of James I., no action having apparently been taken against either author or actors, and yet it was full of magic, astrology, and occultism generally, all of which subjects were anathema to the King, who was himself the author of a book against witchcraft. No one, in Professor Lefranc's opinion, but a powerful nobleman could have dared either to write or publish such a work at a time when the burning of witches was a punishment recognised in criminal law. The more he thought over the subject the more he became convinced that Dr. Dee, Queen Elizabeth's famous astrologer, must have been on intimate terms with the author. It was while

such thoughts as these were uppermost in his mind on the Shakespearean problem that he came across the following among "Notes of News" in *State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth*, vol. cclxxi, No. 35, under the date 30th June, 1599: "Our Earle of Darby is busye in penning commedyes for the commoun players." *

A subsequent reference to Dr. Dee's diary showed the Earl of Derby's name occurring no less than eight times. These two initial discoveries started Professor Lefranc on his investigations, of which the most remarkable are those connected with *Love's Labour's Lost*. Whether Derby wrote this play or whether he merely collaborated with his father-in-law in its production, it may safely be said that no one can with an open mind read Professor Lefranc's chapter on the subject without admitting that he has proved Derby to have been concerned in it past any possibility of doubt.†

Professor Lefranc has no such absolute proof in the case of *The Tempest*, but his arguments are very weighty, and, in the absence of further evidence, his theory may be

* In this connection it is interesting to note that out of the thirteen plays published in quarto during the eleven years from 1594 to 1604, no less than five, *i.e.*, *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, *King Henry V*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*, were published in the year 1600. Derby's activity in "penning commedyes" in 1599 may partly account for this.

† In *Sous le Masque* and in subsequent contributions to the periodical press, Professor Lefranc has proved with equal conclusiveness that Derby was intimately connected with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Vide *Sous le Masque*, Vol. II., Chapter VIII.; *La Réalité dans Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Été*, Geneva, 1920; *L'Opinion* of 16th and 23rd October, 1920; *The Illustrated London News*, 30th October, 1920.

accepted as a practical working hypothesis. Mr. Looney, in *Shakespeare Identified*, argues at length against Oxford's authorship of *The Tempest*. One of his arguments may be quoted here: "We find that the simple noun 'horse,' leaving out all compound derivatives, occurs about 206 times; an average of about six times in each of the 36 plays. If we add to these the words that suggest horse-riding, like 'horseback' and 'horsemanship,' the total reaches nearly 300, not one of which occurs in *The Tempest*—the only play attributed to Shakespeare of which this can be said" (*Shakespeare Identified*, p. 520).

The only reference to sport which, so far as I can remember, occurs in Professor Lefranc's two volumes is an account of a complaint made by the Earl of Derby against one of the royal gamekeepers in Richmond Park. Derby appears to have gone in for shooting, but there does not appear to be any evidence that he took any particular interest in horses. Oxford, on the other hand, was a famous horseman, who excelled in tilts and tourneys, on one occasion receiving the prize at a tournament from the hands of Queen Elizabeth herself.

We may, therefore, take it as a not unlikely supposition that Derby was the author of *The Tempest;* and, further, that he may have contributed this play as a preface or introduction to the First Folio of 1623, in his capacity as literary executor to his father-in-law, the Earl of Oxford.

If this supposition is correct, we have Oxford's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, closely connected with the First Folio. Professor Lefranc's latest discovery is an undated letter from this lady to her uncle, Robert Cecil, on the subject of a certain Brown and his company of players. The letter is published in *L'Indépendance Belge* of the 3rd August, 1922.

In this letter, which is signed " E. Derby," she speaks of her husband " taking delite in the players," thus echoing the words of Rosencrantz when introducing the players to Hamlet.

If the connection between Oxford's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, and the First Folio is a matter of conjecture only, there is no doubt as to the existence of such a link in the case of his youngest daughter, Susan, Countess of Montgomery, for, as Mr. Looney has pointed out in *The Poems of Edward de Vere*, p. xxxv, her husband, Philip, Earl of Montgomery, is one of the " Incomparable Paire of Brethren " to whom the work is dedicated. Is it possible that Oxford's three daughters by Anne Cecil, associated with the Earl of Derby, may be " the grand possessors " of the MSS. of the plays ?

We see that Elizabeth, possibly, and Susan, certainly, were connected with the patrons of the First Folio, but what about Bridget, who married Lord Norris, subsequently created first Earl of Berkshire ?

We saw the three sisters, together with their husbands,

acting together in the matter of the deed executed on the 8th July, 1609, when they " conveyed the Honor of Castle-Hedingham to Elizabeth Vere Countess dowager of Oxford for life, remainder to her son Henry Earl of Oxford for his life . . . remainder to Francis Trentham Esq., brother of the said Countess and his heirs for ever." This shows that what was called the " Honor of Castle-Hedingham " had by some means come into the possession of Oxford's daughters by his first wife, Anne Cecil. Susan is spoken of in *Burke's Peerage*, 1921, p. 1725, as " daughter and eventually co-heir of Ed. Vere, Earl of Oxford." As Edward de Vere does not appear to have made a will, he may possibly have conveyed the " Honor of Castle-Hedingham " to his three daughters by deed of gift, and the MSS. of the plays may have been disposed of in the same manner. The fact that the Earl of Berkshire put an end to his life by shooting himself with a cross-bow on the 29th January, 1623, may perhaps account for the absence of his name from the title page of the Folio of 1623. At the same time it is interesting to note that Bridget was at one time practically engaged to be married to the elder brother of the " incomparable paire," William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and that Oxford wrote appreciatively of him (see article " W. Herbert," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. xxvi, p. 226).

Altogether the circle round the First Folio seems to be a family party affair.

If our surmise is correct as to the three daughters by Anne Cecil being the " grand possessors " of the MSS. of the plays which were published in 1623, the publication of the four Quartos in 1608–09 would seem to have been carried out in antagonism to them. We saw that these four Quartos bore evident traces of unauthorised publication. Were they handed over to the first comer as valueless rubbish when King's Place was cleared out by Elizabeth Trentham in 1609, or were they published or allowed to be published in deliberate violation of the rights of the " grand possessors " ?

There is little doubt that the Cecil and Trentham sides of Oxford's family had very little to say to one another, and were possibly actively hostile. Elizabeth Trentham's will * gives an indication of this feeling, for although it contains numerous personal legacies, some of them in the nature of mementos, there is no allusion whatever to the daughters of the first Lady Oxford, nor to any of the Cecils.

Although strained relations may have existed between the two branches of the family, I am inclined, however, to think that the publications of 1608–09 were less a deliberate violation of rights than a careless disposal of property considered to be of little or no value.

Let us now recapitulate the theory of the Shakespeare publications based on the facts discovered about the Earl

* See Appendix C.

of Oxford's residence at Hackney, the sale of King's Place in 1609, and Professor Lefranc's investigations into the interests and hobbies of the Earl of Derby :

(1) The first great period of Shakespeare publication (1593–1604) coincides with Oxford's residence at Hackney. The two long poems and the thirteen plays were, therefore, probably deliberately published by him at intervals throughout this period.

(2) The second period of Shakespeare publication (1608–09) coincides with Lady Oxford's sale of King's Place. *The Sonnets* and the three plays published at the same time were probably handed over to William Hall and other procurers of MSS. as things of little or no value.

(3) The publication of the First Folio of 1623 was possibly undertaken by the Earl of Derby as literary executor for his father-in-law, on behalf of Oxford's three daughters by Anne Cecil, the "grand possessors" of the MSS.

The next chapter will be devoted to an investigation of the third of the foregoing hypotheses, and evidence will be examined to see what further connection can be found between Oxford and any of his three daughters with the promoters and publishers of the First Folio.

CHAPTER IV

THE DE VERE FAMILY AND THE FIRST FOLIO

"The manner of the publication of the First Folio places beyond doubt the fact that William Shakspere of Stratford had made no arrangement for it. The entire absence of any mention either of his executors or a single member of his much-cared-for family amongst the ten names appearing in connection with the publication, reveals the same completely negative relationship of everything Stratfordian towards the Shakespearean literature."—*Shakespeare Identified*, p. 43.

In the three preceding chapters, emphasis has been laid on three well-marked periods of "Shakespeare" publication:

1. The period 1593–1604.
2. The period 1608–09.
3. The year 1623.

No. 1 period coincides with Oxford's residence at Hackney, from the birth of his son and heir, Henry, in 1593 to his death in 1604.

No. 2 period coincides with Lady Oxford's sale of King's Place in 1609.

No. 3 period saw the publication of the First Folio.

In Chapter III the possibility of the Earl of Derby being the editor of the volume was discussed.

Apart from this possibility, Professor Lefranc has brought forward many arguments in favour of his authorship of the introductory play, *The Tempest*. In either case Elizabeth de Vere, as Countess of Derby, would be brought into close connection with the book. Susan de Vere was the wife of Philip, Earl of Montgomery, the younger of the two brothers to whom the volume was dedicated, and Bridget de Vere had been at one time engaged to be married * to William, Earl of Pembroke, the elder of the "Incomparable Paire of Brethren" whose names appear on the title page.

The three sisters, Elizabeth, Bridget, and Susan, may, therefore, it was argued, have been "the grand possessors" of the MSS. alluded to in the Preface to the unauthorised *Troilus and Cressida* Quarto published in 1609.

The clearest connection is that between Susan de Vere and the Folio, and her name is also prominently associated with that of Ben Jonson, the author of two of the five poems written as an Introduction to the volume.

In order to bring out this connection it is necessary to realise the change that took place in theatrical fashions after the death of Queen Elizabeth.

* See *D.N.B.*, Art. "Herbert William, 3rd Earl of Pembroke," Vol. xxvi, p. 226.

" With the accession of King James, Jonson began his long and successful career as a writer of masques. He wrote more masques than all his competitors put together. . . . He gave dramatic value to the antimasque. . . . He enhanced, as well, the beauty and dignity of those portions of the masque in which noble lords and ladies took their parts, to create, by their gorgeous costumes and artistic grouping and evolutions, a sumptuous show."—*Jonson's Plays,* Everyman edition, I, p. xix.

From the records in Fleay's *Chronicle History of the London Stage* it is evident that Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones were the great organisers of these displays.

In a chapter of Fleay's book entitled " Court Performances (1603–1614) " a list is given, from 1st November, 1604, to the 12th February, 1605, of seven plays by Shakespeare, two by Jonson, one by Heywood, one by Chapman, and two masques.

One of the masques is the one that was performed at the marriage on the 27th December, 1604, of " Sir Ed. Herbert and Lady Susan Vere." This masque is sandwiched in between two plays by " Shaxberd," *Measure for Measure* and *The Play of Errors*. Doubtless " Sir Ed. Herbert " is a mistake for Sir Philip Herbert, afterwards Earl of Montgomery. On p. 183 of Fleay's book is given a table of male performers in Court masques, from which it is seen that William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, took a part in the masque produced at his brother's wedding, and also in wedding masques on two subsequent occasions.

Philip Herbert also acted in three out of the six masques shown in the table. On p. 184 Fleay gives a list of the ladies who performed in four of the court masques between 1605 and 1610. There are no less than twenty-nine names, some of their bearers only performing in two or three out of the four. And there are only three ladies who performed in all four, namely :

(1) The Queen.
(2) Susan de Vere (Countess of Montgomery).
(3) Alice Spencer (Dowager Countess of Derby).

The four masques given in this table are :

(1) "Blackness," by Jonson and Inigo Jones.
(2) "Beauty," by Jonson.
(3) "The Queens," by Jonson and Inigo Jones.
(4) "Tethys' Festival," by Inigo Jones and Daniel.

(FLEAY, pp. 179–181.)

From the foregoing it is clear that the Queen, Susan de Vere, and Alice Spencer—Elizabeth de Vere's sister-in-law—were the great enthusiasts in these masques, written for the most part by Jonson, and in the preparations and rehearsals for which Ben Jonson and Susan de Vere would be in direct personal association and dramatic co-operation. Ben Jonson's *Epigrams*, which he characterises as "the ripest of my studies," are dedicated to "the most noble William Earl of Pembroke." One of these epigrams —No. C II—is addressed to the Earl of Pembroke himself, and another one to Susan, Countess of Montgomery.

As this latter epigram contains unmistakable echoes of lines from both of his introductory poems to the First Folio, it will be quoted here in full :

" To Susan, Countess of Montgomery

" Were they that named you prophets ? Did they see
Even in the dew of Grace what you would be ?
Or did our times require it to behold
A new Susanna equal to that old ?
Or, because some scarce think that story true
To make those faithful did the Fates send you ?
And to your Scene lent no less dignity
Of birth, of match, of form, of chastity ?
Or, more than born for the comparison
Of former age, or glory of your own
Were you advanced past those times to be
The light and mark unto Posterity ?
Judge they that can : *Here I have raised to show*
A picture, which the world for yours must know ;
And like it too ; if they look equally :
If not, 'tis fit for you, some should envy."

The following are Ben Jonson's lines facing the Droeshout engraving of Shakespeare in the 1623 Folio :

" To the Reader

" This Figure, that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut ;
Wherein the Graver had a strife
With Nature, to out-doo the life :
O, could he but have drawne his wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit

His face ; the Print would then surpasse
All that was ever writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader look,
Not on his Picture, but his Booke."

These lines are accepted by orthodox readers as Ben Jonson's attestation to "the lifelike accuracy of the portrait."

More sceptical readers suspect a double meaning in the words "out-doo" in the fourth line and "hit" in the sixth. To "out-doo the life" may mean to destroy the life ; and "hit" is an old form of the word "hid," so that Ben Jonson may all the time be congratulating Martin Droeshout on having so successfully destroyed the life and concealed the features of the Earl of Oxford.

If we compare the two sets of verses—the one to Susan de Vere and the other to William Shakespeare—it is difficult to resist the feeling that they were written at about the same time, and that the Shakespeare lines were distinctly in Jonson's mind when he addressed the poem to Susan de Vere.

When he says "Here I have raised to show A picture, which the world for yours must know," may he not be alluding to some other picture that the world had not recognised because of its unlikeness ?

There is also, it seems to me, a connection between certain lines in the Countess of Montgomery epigram and Ben Jonson's magnificent eulogy prefixed to the First Folio.

When he addresses the Countess as being " more than born for the comparison Of former age, or glory of your own," is not an echo discernible of the lines in which he declares he will leave Shakespeare " alone for the comparison Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come " ?

Another and a more direct connection can be traced between Ben Jonson and Edward de Vere.

Mr. J. Thomas Looney, in his edition of the *Poems of Edward de Vere*, pp. liv–lviii, has shown it to be highly probable that the poems signed " Ignoto " in *England's Helicon* were written by him. They certainly bear a strong resemblance both in spirit and form to Edward de Vere's acknowledged poems.

A poem signed " Ignoto " occurs at the end of the *Verses to the Author of the Faery Queen*, just preceding the Sonnets addressed by the author, Edmund Spenser, to his friends and patrons. The poem consists of four stanzas in de Vere's favourite *Venus and Adonis* metre, the first three stanzas being to the following effect :

" To look upon a work of rare devise
The which a workman setteth out to view,
And not to yield it the deservèd prize
That unto such a workmanship is due,
Doth either prove the judgment to be naught,
Or else doth show a mind with envy fraught.

" To labour to commend a piece of work
Which no man goes about to discommend,
Would raise a jealous doubt, that there did lurk
Some secret doubt whereto the praise did tend :
For when men know the goodness of the wine,
'Tis needless for the host to have a sign.

" Thus then to show my judgment to be such
As can discern of colours black and white,
As alls to free my mind from envy's touch,
That never gives to any man his right ;
I here pronounce this workmanship is such
As that no pen can set it forth too much."

Ben Jonson begins his great eulogy in the First Folio as follows :

" To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame ;
While I confess thy writings to be such,
As neither man nor Muse can praise too much."

There is a parallelism between the two cases that must have been present in Jonson's mind when he wrote those lines in 1623. Thirty-four years before, in 1589, Edward de Vere, as the great English poet of the time, had written without a touch of envy some introductory stanzas to the masterpiece of his great contemporary poet, Edmund Spenser.

There is a kind of royal magnificence in the judgment delivered by " Ignoto " on the *Faery Queen :*

" I here pronounce this workmanship is such
As that no pen can set it forth too much."

Ben Jonson, as the great dramatist of the day, is not to be outdone in generosity :

> " To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
> Am I thus ample to thy book and fame ;
> While I confess thy writings to be such,
> As neither man nor Muse can praise too much."

" O, Rare Ben Jonson ! " He might poke fun at the portrait, but when it comes to the book he will praise the " Unknown " dramatist behind the mask no less generously, and even more magnificently, than " Ignoto " himself praised his own great contemporary poet.

A last connection with Oxford may be traced in the case of Edward Blount, who, with Isaac Jaggard, obtained on the 8th November, 1623, formal licence from the Stationers' Company to publish the First Folio.

It was upon Blount, Sir Sidney Lee tells us, that the chief labour of seeing the work through the Press probably fell.

He had been previously associated with " Shakespeare " work, for he had published in 1601 Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*, a book which contained poems signed " Ignoto " and " William Shake-speare " ; and nine years after the publication of the First Folio he collected and published for the first time John Lyly's *Sixe Court Comedies*.

Sir Sidney Lee writes, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. v, p. 246, " Blount appears to have had

access to Lyly's MSS. ; in no earlier editions of the separate plays were any of Lyly's lyrics inserted."

John Lyly was for some years theatrical manager to the Earl of Oxford, and the Lyly lyrics were in all probability written by the master, and not by the manager (see *The Poems of Edward de Vere*, pp. lxiv, 46–59, and *Shakespeare Identified*, pp. 329–334).

Certainly the lyric commencing

" Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses. Cupid paid."

seems beyond the reach of John Lyly.

Out of the ten names on the title page and Introduction of the First Folio we have now shown more than half to be more or less closely connected either with Edward de Vere himself or with one of his daughters. If Professor Lefranc is right in attributing the authorship of *The Tempest* to the Earl of Derby, Oxford's daughter Elizabeth is brought into the circle as well.

Of the two earls to whom the volume was dedicated one was husband to Susan de Vere, and the other was her brother-in-law.

The two dedicatory addresses signed by John Heminge and Henry Condell have been by many critics attributed to Ben Jonson. Sir Sidney Lee considers it " more probable that they delegated much of their editorial duty to the publisher, Edward Blount, who was not unversed in the

dedicatory art " (*Life of William Shakespeare*, Ed. of 1922, p. 558).

Their personality may therefore be considered as being absorbed either in that of Ben Jonson or of Edward Blount. The former had for many years been in close touch with Susan de Vere. The latter had been engaged in producing Shakespeare work during Oxford's life, and his publication of John Lyly's plays with the missing lyrics in 1632 shows that he was probably well aware of the de Vere secret.

We are now in a position to sum up the various conclusions reached and coincidences detected in the foregoing chapters. These results are based, in the first instance, on the discovery of the marriage of William Hall at Hackney on the 4th August, 1608.

This discovery was made during a search conducted on the hypothesis that William Hall, the publisher of Robert Southwell's *Foure-fold Meditation* in 1606 and the procurer of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* in 1609, had obtained the MSS. from King's Place and was himself a Hackney man.

The record of the marriage in the Hackney Parish Register was a piece of circumstantial evidence pointing to Edward de Vere as the author of *The Sonnets*, and most probably, therefore, of the bulk of the plays of Shakespeare.

The following correspondences and coincidences have since been brought out :

(1) The first period of Shakespeare publication (1593–

1604) corresponds with Edward de Vere's life in retirement at Hackney.

(2) The second period of Shakespeare publication (1608–09) coincides with the sale of King's Place by Lady Oxford in 1609.

(3) The dates of William Shakspere's visits to London correspond with critical Oxford-Trentham dates.

(4) Most of the names connected with the third and last period of Shakespeare publication (1623) are connected in some way with Edward de Vere or with one of his daughters by his first wife, Anne Cecil.

CHAPTER V

THE PERSONALITY OF EDWARD DE VERE

" 'Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed,
When not to be, receives reproach of being ;
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed,
Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing :
For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood ?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good ?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own :
I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel ;
By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown ;
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad, and in their badness reign."

Sonnet 121.

THE writer of the foregoing sonnet was evidently a man of intensely sympathetic temperament. He lays stress on the justice of the pleasure which we derive from the esteem of our fellows, and, indeed, he rates this pleasure so highly that he goes so far as to say that, if he must be thought vile, he would rather actually be vile than not, so keen is this sense of justice. At the same time he is not a man who is

doubtful about his real position. " No, I am that I am," * and no one, he seems to say, has the right to judge me without understanding me. I grant I am not immaculate, but " there is some soul of goodness in things evil," and I will never subscribe to the cynical doctrine that " all men are bad, and in their badness reign," and that selfishness and greed are the only human motives that count.

It may, indeed, be said that the central idea of the Shakespearean drama is a continuous and strenuous refutation of the doctrine that " all men are bad and in their badness reign ; " while on its positive side charity to all is the chief lesson which is continually being enforced. Falstaff may be anything but a respectable member of society, Sir Toby Belch may be much too fond of the bottle, Parolles may be a braggart and a coward, but the human qualities in each and all of them endear them to us and make us feel that they, with all their faults, like ourselves, belong to the great human brotherhood, where " one touch of Nature makes the whole world kin." Many examples might be given to show how much Edward de Vere suffered from detraction and public obloquy, and what a wounded name

* This phrase—" I am that I am "—occurs in a letter, dated 30th October, 1584, from the Earl of Oxford to Lord Burleigh. The original is in the British Museum (*Lansdowne MSS.* 42, No. 39). (See Plate VIII, and Appendix E.) Mr. J. Thomas Looney first drew attention to this phrase n his article in the *Golden Hind* for October, 1922, entitled " The Earl of Oxford as ' Shakespeare.' " The letter was first published in Albert Feuillerat's *John Lyly*, 1910, Appendix XXXI, p. 532.

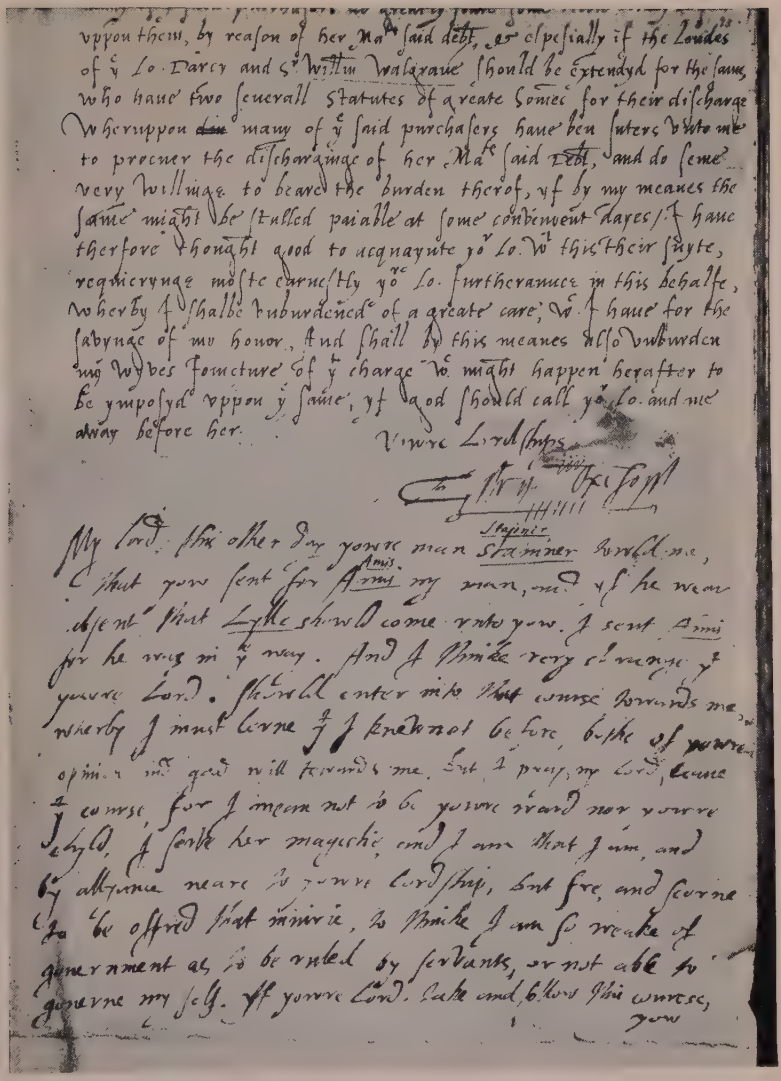


Photo R. B. Fleming.

HANDWRITING OF EDWARD DE VERE, 1584.

he has left behind him. His nature was probably such that he did not realise to what an extent envy was the motive of this detraction; but there is reason to suspect, for instance, that Burleigh, who recognised his abilities, kept him down in order that he should not interfere with his son Robert Cecil's prospects.

There is a document preserved in the Record Office entitled "True declaration by Charles Arundel," dated 1581, which gives a good idea of the scandals spread abroad, and doubtless largely credited at the time, about the young Earl of Oxford. Two years before, he had had a quarrel in the tennis court at Whitehall with Sir Philip Sidney, and this is made the basis of a charge of cowardice and of attempting to murder Sidney.

He is also accused of spreading scandalous reports about Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester, and of practising magical arts in the Tilt-yard at Greenwich. "At his being in Flanders," Charles Arundel goes on to say, "the Duke of Alva, as he will constantly affirm, grew so much to affect him as he made him his lieutenant-general over all the army then in the Low Country." He is thus accused of being a coward, a murderer, a scandal-monger, a wizard, and as having held a military appointment under Philip II of Spain, England's great enemy.

The self-contradiction involved in some of these charges, and the manifest absurdity and extravagance of others, do

not prevent a modern biographer of Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. J. A. St. John, writing in 1869, from commenting as follows : " Dislodged from this position (*i.e.*, the command in the Netherlands) by the Queen's order, he returned to England ; but, after a brief stay, again repaired to the Continent, crossed the Alps, and in the quarrels of Genoa, this ancestor of the renowned Captain Lemuel Gulliver proceeded to Venice, by whose priests and courtesans he appears to have been equally fascinated."

All these details are given in a chapter entitled " Raleigh's Gay Associates in London," and Oxford is described as having had the worst possible influence over him. The loss of his good name, which Edward de Vere bemoaned in 1576 in a striking poem parodied by Spenser in his *Shepherd's Calendar*, had possibly made him reckless as to public opinion. In any case, few people have suffered more from detraction and envy than Edward de Vere, both during his lifetime, and right up to the present day.

It almost looks as if Spenser had taken him for his model in describing, in the Sixth Book of the *Faery Queen*, the legend of Sir Calidore. Upton, a commentator on the *Faery Queen*, thinks that Sir Philip Sidney is intended, but the circumstances seem to fit de Vere's case much more closely.

The prefatory sonnet addressed by Spenser " To the Right Honourable the Earle of Oxenford, Lord High Cham-

berlain of England, etc." may with advantage be quoted here in full; for, in addition to recognising the love borne to the Muses or Heliconian imps by Oxford, and their love to him, Spenser suggests that the antique glory of the de Vere ancestry, as well as Edward de Vere's "own long living memory," are treated of in the *Faery Queen* "under a shady veil."

In the sonnet addressed by Spenser to Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, there is no suggestion that Sidney himself is one of the figures portrayed in the *Faery Queen*. This makes it more probable that it is Oxford, and not Sidney, who is represented in Sir Calidore.

The following is Spenser's sonnet to Oxford:

"Receive, most noble Lord, in gentle gree,
The unripe fruit of an unready wit;
Which, by thy countenance, doth crave to be
Defended from foul envy's poisonous bit.
Which so to do may thee right well befit,
Sith th' antique glory of thine ancestry
Under a shady veil is therein writ,
And eke thine own long living memory,
Succeeding them in true nobility:
And also for the love which thou dost bear
To th' Heliconian imps, and they to thee;
They unto thee, and thou to them, most dear:
Dear as thou art unto thyself, so love
That loves and honours thee, as doth behove."

At the close of the fifth book of the *Faery Queen* Sir Artegall, undoubtedly Lord Grey, is described as having

been recalled from Ireland on account of over-severity to the Irish rebels. Two hags named Envy and Detraction meet him, and proceed to rail at and abuse him, and at the same time set on a foul monster, the Blatant Beast, to bark and bay at him. In the first canto of the next book Sir Calidore meets Sir Artegall, and the following conversation begins :

> " ' Now tell, if please you, of the good success
> Which ye have had in your late enterprise.'
> To whom Sir Artegall 'gan to express
> His whole exploit and valorous emprise,
> In order as it did to him arise.
> ' Now, happy man,' said then Sir Calidore,
> ' Which have, so goodly as ye can devise,
> Achieved so hard a quest, as few before ;
> That shall you most renownèd make for evermore.
>
> " ' But, where ye ended have, now I begin
> To tread an endless trace, withouten guide
> Or good direction how to enter in,
> Or how to issue forth in ways untried,
> In perils strange, in labours long and wide ;
> In which although good fortune me befall,
> Yet shall it not by none be testified.' "

The quest of Sir Calidore was the capture of the Blatant Beast, and the twelfth canto contains a description of how, after he had run him down after a long fight,

> " At last, when as he found his force to shrink
> And rage to quail, he took a muzzle strong
> Of surest iron, made with many a link ;

Therewith he murèd up his mouth along,
And therein shut up his blasphèmous tongue,
For never more defaming gentle knight,
Or unto lovely lady doing wrong ;
And thereunto a great long chain he tight,*
With which he drew him forth, even in his own despite."

It is certainly true that the Blatant Beast of Envy and Detraction was never more systematically muzzled than he was in the Shakespearean drama, and Edward de Vere, no less than Sir Calidore, might have described his own quest as one

" ' In which although good fortune me befall,
Yet shall it not by none be testified.' "

Although most of the contemporary evidence as to Edward de Vere seems to have been furnished by Envy and Detraction and the barking of the Blatant Beast, there are some exceptions to this rule. One of these exceptions consists of a passage from George Chapman's play, *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, published in 1613.

The hero of the tragedy is Clermont d'Ambois, whose brother, Bussy d'Ambois, has been murdered before the play opens. Clermont is a friend of the Duke de Guise, and is therefore considered a dangerous man by the King. The character of Clermont is that of a soldier, philosopher and student combined.

The following conversation between Baligny, the Lord

* Tied.

Lieutenant of Cambray, and Guise illustrates this. King Henry III has just given secret instructions to Baligny to have Clermont arrested. Baligny has suggested that Clermont should be invited by the King to a parade or muster of troops to be held in his honour at Cambray, arrangements being made for him to be apprehended by some close stratagem :

> " ' For otherwise,' says Baligny, ' your whole powers there will fail
> To work his apprehension : and with that
> My hand needs never be discerned therein.' "

After having arranged this treacherous scheme together, Henry goes out and Guise enters, and the following conversation takes place between him and Baligny :

GUISE. My sure Friend Baligny !

BAL. Noblest of Princes !

GUISE. How stands the State of Cambray ?

BAL. Strong, my Lord,
And fit for service : for whose readinesse
Your creature Clermont D'Ambois, and my selfe
Ride shortly downe.

GUISE. That Clermont is my love ;
France never bred a nobler Gentleman
For all parts : he exceedes his Brother Bussy.

BAL. Aye, my Lord ?

GUISE. Farre : because (besides his valour)
Hee hath the crowne of man, and all his parts,
Which Learning is ; and that so true and vertuous,

That it gives power to doe, as well as say
What ever fits a most accomplisht man ;
Which Bussy, for his valours season, lackt ;
And so was rapt with outrage oftentimes
Beyond Decorum ; where this absolute Clermont,
Though (onely for his naturall zeale to right)
Hee will be fiery, when hee sees it crost ;
And in defence of it ; yet when he lists
Hee can containe that fire, as hid in Embers.

BAL. No question, hee's a true, learn'd, Gentleman.

GUISE. He is as true as Tides, or any Starre
Is in his motion : And for his rare learning,
Hee is not (as all else are that seeke knowledge)
Of taste so much deprav'd, that they had rather
Delight, and satisfie themselves to drinke
Of the streame troubled, wandring ne'er so farre
From the cleare fount, then of the fount it selfe.
In all ; Romes Brutus is reviv'd in him,
Whom hee of industry doth imitate.
Or rather, as great Troys Euphorbus was
After Pithagoras ; so is Brutus, Clermont.

In the third act Clermont is at Cambray on the invitation of his treacherous brother-in-law Baligny, and has received from Challon, one of the King's captains, an invitation thus verbally delivered to two soldiers :

CHAL. Goe now to Clermont D'Ambois, and informe him,
Two Battailes are set ready in his honour,
And stay his presence onely for their signall,
When they shall joyne : and that t' attend him hither,
Like one wee so much honour, we have sent him

1ST SOL. Us two in person.

CHAL. Well sir, say it so.
And having brought him to the field, when I
Fall in with him, saluting, get you both
Of one side of his horse, and plucke him downe,
And I with th' ambush laid, will second you.

Clermont suspects treachery, although he cannot bring himself to believe his sister's husband to be such a villain as to entrap him thus ; but, being well mounted, he decides to attend the review.

The following soliloquy and conversation between Clermont and his friend, the Marquis Renel, immediately precedes Clermont's departure, mounted on his "Scotch running horse," to see the tactical scheme arranged in his honour :

CLERMONT *solus*.

CLER. I had an aversation to this voyage
When first my Brother mov'd it ; and have found
That native power in me was never vaine ;
Yet now neglected it, I wonder much
At my inconstancie in these decrees,
I every houre set downe to guide my life.
When Homer made Achilles passionate,
Wrathfull, revengefull, and insatiate
In his affections ; what man will denie,
He did compose it all of industrie,
To let men see, that men of most renowne,
Strong'st, noblest, fairest, if they set not downe
Decrees within them, for disposing these,

Of Judgement, Resolution, Uprightnesse,
And certaine knowledge, of their use and ends,
Mishap and miserie no lesse extends
To their destruction ; with all that they pris'd,
Then to the poorest, and the most despis'd.

(*Enter* RENEL.)

RENEL. Why, how now friend ? retir'd ? take heede
you prove not
Dismaid with this strange fortune : all observe you.
Your government's as much markt as the Kings.
What said a friend to Pompey ?

CLER. What ?

RENEL. The people
Will never know, unlesse in death thou trie
That thou know'st how to beare adversitie.

CLER. I shall approve how vile I value feare
Of death at all times : but to be too rash,
Without both will and care to shunne the worst,
(It being in power to doe, well and with cheere)
Is stupid negligence, and worse than feare.

RENEL. Suppose this true now.

CLER. No, I cannot doo't.
My sister truely said ; there hung a taile
Of circumstance so blacke on that supposure,
That to sustaine it thus, abhorr'd our mettall.
And I can shunne it too, in spight of all :
Not going to field : and there too, being so mounted
As I will, since I goe.

RENEL. You will then goe ?

CLER. I am engag'd both in my word, and hand ;

But this is it, that makes me thus retir'd,
To call my selfe t' account, how this affaire
Is to be manag'd if the worst should chance :
With which I note, how dangerous it is,
For any man to prease beyond the place,
To which his birth, or meanes, or knowledge ties him,
For my part, though of noble birth my birth-right
Had little left it, and I know tis better
To live with little ; and to keepe within
A mans owne strength still, and in mans true end,
Then runne a mixt course. Good and bad hold never
Any thing common : you can never finde
Things outward care, but you neglect your minde.
God hath the whole world perfect made and free ;
His parts to th' use of th' all ; men then that are
Parts of that all, must as the generall sway
Of that importeth, willingly obay
In every thing without their power to change.
Hee that unpleas'd to hold his place, will range,
Can in no other be contain'd that's fit,
And so resisting th' All, is crusht with it.
But he that knowing how divine a Frame
The whole world is : and of it all, can name
(Without selfe-flatterie) no part so divine,
As hee himselfe ; and therefore will confine
Freely, his whole powers, in his proper part,
Goes on most God-like. Hee that strives t' invert
The Universals course with his poore way,
Not onely dust-like shivers with the sway,
But crossing God in his great worke ; all earth
Beares not so cursed, and so damn'd a birth.

RENEL. Goe on ; Ile take no care what comes of you ;

Heaven will not see it ill, how ere it show ;
But the pretext to see these Battailes rang'd
Is much your honour.

CLER. As the world esteemes it.
But to decide that ; you make me remember
An accident of high and noble note,
And fits the subject of my late discourse,
Of holding on our free and proper way.
I over-tooke, comming from Italie,
In Germanie, a great and famous Earle
Of England ; the most goodly fashion'd man
I ever saw : from head to foot in forme
Rare, and most absolute ; hee had a face
Like one of the most ancient honour'd Romanes,
From whence his noblest Familie was deriv'd ;
He was beside of spirit passing great,
Valiant, and learn'd, and liberall as the Sunne,
Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learned subjects,
Or of the discipline of publike weales ;
And t'was the Earle of Oxford : and being offer'd
At that time, by Duke Cassimere, the view
Of his right royall Armie then in field ;
Refus'd it, and no foote was mov'd, to stirre
Out of his owne free fore-determin'd course :
I wondring at it, askt for it his reason,
It being an offer so much for his honour.
Hee, all acknowledging, said, t'was not fit
To take those honours that one cannot quit.*

RENEL. **Twas answer'd like the man you have describ'd.**

* Repay.

CLER. **And yet he cast it onely in the way,**
To stay and serve the world. Nor did it fit
His owne true estimate how much it waigh'd,
For hee despis'd it; and esteem'd it freer
To keepe his owne way straight, and swore that hee
Had rather make away his whole estate
In things that crost the vulgar, then he would
Be frozen up, stiffe, like a sir John Smith
(His Countrey-man) in common Nobles fashions;
Affecting, as the end of Noblesse were
Those servile observations.

RENEL. It was strange.

CLER. O tis a vexing sight to see a man
Out of his way, stalke, proud as hee were in;
Out of his way to be officious,
Observant, wary, serious, and grave,
Fearefull, and passionate, insulting, raging,
Labour with iron Flailes, to thresh downe feathers
Flitting in ayre.

RENEL. What one considers this,
Of all that are thus out? or once endeavours,
Erring to enter, on mans Right-hand path?

CLER. These are too grave for brave wits: give them toyes,
Labour bestow'd on these is harsh and thriftlesse,
If you would Consull be (says one) of Rome,
You must be watching, starting out of sleepes;
Every way whisking; gloryfying Plebeians,
Kissing Patricians hands, Rot at their dores;
Speake and doe basely; every day bestow
Gifts and observance upon one or other:

And what's th' event of all ? Twelve Rods before thee,
Three or foure times sit for the whole Tribunall.
Exhibite Circean Games ; make publike feasts,
And for these idle outward things (sayes he)
Would'st thou lay on such cost, toile, spend thy spirits.
And to be voide of perturbation
For constancie : sleepe when thou would'st have sleepe,
Wake when thou would'st wake, feare nought, vexe for nought,
No paines wilt thou bestow ? no cost ? no thought ?

RENEL. What should I say ? as good comfort with you,
As with an Angell : I could heare you ever.

CLER. Well ; in, my Lord, and spend time with my Sister ;
And keepe her from the Field with all endeavour ;
The Souldiers love her so ; and shee so madly
Would take my apprehension, if it chance,
That bloud would flow in rivers.

RENEL. Heaven forbid ;
And all with honour your arrivall speede.

(*Exit.*)

The foregoing extracts are given at some length, not only on account of the direct reference they contain to a conversation with the Earl of Oxford, but also because George Chapman would seem to have drawn the character of Clermont d'Ambois with Edward de Vere in his mind.

Clermont is a Hamlet, without his tendency to inaction. He carries out his task of avenging his brother's death without any of the indecision shown by the Prince of

Denmark. It would almost seem as if George Chapman felt that Edward de Vere had hardly done justice to one side of his character in portraying himself as the dreamy, poetical prince who cannot decide or make up his mind on any definite line of action.*

The other quotation is from a rare pamphlet entitled *Honour in his Perfection*, by G. M. (possibly Gervase Markham), published in 1624.

This pamphlet appears to have been written partly as a recruiting pamphlet, urging young fellows to join the expedition to the Low Countries under the Earls of Southampton and Oxford, where Sir Horace Vere was upholding the cause of Protestantism and the United Provinces against the Spaniards. Henry, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, had succeeded his father in the title in 1604, when he was only eleven years old, and had already for some years served under his uncle, Sir Horace, to whom he had been probably commended by Edward de Vere before his death. *Honour in his Perfection* consists in part of a detailed eulogy of the

* Since writing the foregoing I have read Mr. Phelps' Preface to *George Chapman's Plays*, edited by him in 1895. He also seems to have been struck by Clermont's resemblance to Hamlet.

"*The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*," he writes, "published in 1613, is, from the dramatic point of view, distinctly inferior to its predecessor, *Bussy D'Ambois*; but it is crowded with splendid declamation, and full of the richest treasures of thought. It contains passages which make one stop and reflect, and re-read only to ponder again. The hero, Clermont D'Ambois, has little family resemblance to his brother. Bussy is like Tamburlaine, but Clermont suggests Hamlet. He resembles the melancholy Dane not only in his powers of reflection, and in his innate good breeding, but in his constant postponement of revenge."

de Vere family, the members of which are described *seriatim*.

John, Edward de Vere's father, is described as a famous sportsman who once, when in France, killed a wild boar that attacked him in a narrow path, with a rapier, a feat that astonished his French hosts above measure. The remaining de Veres, commencing with the 17th Earl, are described as follows :

" Descend but to the noble Father of this princely *Oxford* now living, and you shall finde, that although the blessed armes of *Peace*, in the blessed daies of the ever blessed *Elizabeth*, did so foulde and imbrace our Kingdome about, that every valiant arme for want of imployment, lay as it were manakled and fettered from the use of weapon ; yet this nobleman breakes off his Gyves ; and both in *Italie*, *France*, and other Nations, did more Honour to this Kingdome, then all that have travelled since he tooke his journey to heaven. It were infinite to speake of his infinite expence, the infinite numbers of his attendants, or the infinite house he kept to feede all people ; were his president now to be followed by all of his ranke, the Pope might hang himselfe for an English Papist ; discontentment would not feede our enemies Armies, nor would there be either a Gentleman or Scholar to make a Masse-Priest or a Jesuite ; that he was upright and honest in all his dealings the few debts he left behind him to clog his survivors, were safe pledges ; and that hee was holy and Religious the Chapels and Churches he did frequent, and from whence no occasion could draw him ; the almes he gave (which at this day would not only feede the poore, but the great man's family also) and the bountie which Religion and Learning daily tooke from him, are Trumpets so loude, that all eares know them ;

so that I conclude, and say of him, as the ever memorable Queene *Elizabeth* said of Sir Charles *Blount*, Lord *Mountjoy*, and after Earle of *Devonshire*, that he was *Honestus, Pietas* (*sic*) and *Magnanimus*.

"What shall I speake of the two famous wonders of our Land, the ever memorable Sir *Francis Vere* deceased; and Sir *Horace Vere* now living, his noble brother: to speake of one action were to draw thousands into my remembrance; or to name one place were to lay the Map of almost all Europe before me: and therefore I will referre you to the Chronicles of *Spain* and *Portugale*, where as long as there stands a *Cales*, or abides an Iland of the *Azores*, you shall see a *Vere* in a Souldiers Triumph. Looke in many of the viewes of France, and there you shall finde Vere armed; see the Stories of the dissentions in *Germanie*, and there you shall finde Vere strugling with Honour; nay, looke in all that hath beene written in the *Neatherlands*, within the compasse of the longest memory now living, and believe it in every page, in every action, *Vere* cannot be omitted: only in that Storie there is one pretty secret or mysterie which I cannot let passe untouched, because it brings many difficulties or doubts into the minde of an ignorant Reader; and that is, the mistaking of names, for the Authour of that Worke bindes himselfe too strictly to the Scripture phrase, which is to make one name to containe another; as the name *Adam* to containe the name *Eva* also, and the word *man* to containe the word *woman* also; and so the Authour speaking of many notable and famous exploits fortunately performed, delivers you peradventure but the name of *Nassau* or the *Dutch*, and such like; whereas in truth and true meaning, the name of *Vere* should ever be included within them, and the sence so read, the Story is perfect.

"I speak not this to derogate anything from the excellencies of that most excellent Prince to whose Virtue I could willingly fall down and become a bond-slave; for the whole World must

allow him a Souldier unparaleld, and a Prince of infinite merit but only to shew that the least spark of Vertue which is, cannot chuse but repine when it finds a great Vertue injur'd by a pen whose blaunching might make the whole World forgetfull."

" Lastly, thou shalt not neede to reade, but with thy finger point at the life of the now Earle of *Oxford*, of whom but to speake reasonable truthes (such is the poison of Envy) every good word would be accounted flattery, and to speake anything contrary to goodnesse, Truth herselfe would swear it were meer Falshood ; Therefore I will forbear his Chronicle, and only say thus, that his Cradle did point him out a Souldier ; for he brought that spirit with him into the World, and that spirit he hath still nourisht ; for divide his Age into three parts, and I think two of them have beene bestowed on Forraine Nations ; neither has he let slip any occasion (how great or low soever) which might put him into action, hee hath hung about the neck of his noble Kinsman like a rich Jewell, and the one hath so adorned the other, the one with Counsell, the other with obedience, the one shewing what to doe, the other doing what was fit to be done, that if there be a hope whereon mortalitie may build, there is none more strong, than that wee have of this Nobleman. Goe on then great Prince in this brave careire of *Honour*, and fixe for thine object the designes of thy famous Ancestour ; and as he restored the lost House of *Lancaster*, so I Prophesie, if thou beest not the head, yet thou wilt bee the right arme to the body which shall bringe backe againe to the royall owner the now wasted *Palatinate*."

These two quotations—one from George Chapman, and the other from Gervase Markham—are interesting in several respects. George Chapman's posthumous eulogy is a specially valuable document in our " *Procès de réhabilitation*."

The sentiment, "It is not fit to take those honours that one cannot quit," argues a character of single-minded devotion to his chosen calling. If Edward de Vere is Shakespeare, we may have some idea of how those thirteen years in retirement at Hackney were spent. In one of his early poems he had described himself as being one

> "That never am less idle, lo!
> Than when I am alone."

The last seven years of his life at King's Place coincided with the publication of three editions of *Richard III*, three editions of *Richard II*, three editions of *Henry IV* (First Part), two editions of *Romeo and Juliet*, two editions of *Henry V*, two editions of *Hamlet*, and single editions of the following:

Love's Labour's Lost.
Titus Andronicus.
Midsummer Night's Dream.
Merchant of Venice.
Henry IV (Second Part).
Much Ado about Nothing.
The Merry Wives of Windsor.

Making a grand total of twenty-two editions, or an average of over three editions every year.

His early description of himself was certainly proved to be no empty boast. No one could carry through such a

task unless he had deliberately sacrificed all outward honours on the altar of his chosen art.

The last play, corrected and enlarged to almost half as much again as it was in the edition of 1603, was the 1604 *Hamlet*, by almost universal consent allowed to be the greatest of the masterpieces.

The quotation from *Honour in his Perfection* is interesting in this respect, that it lends colour to the theory propounded in *Shakespeare Identified* that Sir Horace Vere, under whom Henry, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, did his early soldiering in the Low Countries, was the Horatio to whom Hamlet committed the task of reporting him and his cause aright to the unsatisfied.

If this be so, it would seem that Edward de Vere, before he died, intended that his secret should be revealed to the world, or possibly he did not go farther than voice his regret that it was too late for such a revelation to be made. In either case, what interest attaches to the old Elizabethan manor, King's Place, where the true tragedy of Hamlet was enacted!

A full description of the house as it exists at the present time, with plans and drawings, is given under its modern title in "*Brooke House, Hackney*. By Ernest A. Mann, Architect. Being the fifth Monograph of the Committee for the Survey of the Memorials of Greater London." 37 Cheyne Walk, S.W. 1904.

The following is extracted from Mr. Mann's book :

"The Countess of Oxford became tenant of the mansion (according to *Thomas*) in 1596, and retained it till 1609, when she alienated it to Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke.

"It was during the occupancy of the Countess of Oxford, or shortly after when it again became vested in the Crown (*temp.* James I) (Lysons), that an inventory of the goods in the house was prepared (*Ayscough's Catalogue No.* 103, *Sloan Roll* XXXI).

"It is now in the British Museum, and is a curious document, worthy of reproduction as indicating very precisely the apartments then existing and their contents :

No. 1.

In the little Parlor. Item.—A Story of the Rich man and Death, etc.

In the great Parlor. Item.—Hanging of blewe and yellow seige, etc.

No. 2.

In the Presse Chamber. Item.—A clere story glased with two casements, etc.

In the Study in the Great Chamber. Item.—A dore with lock and key, a bench and a shelfe, the study cealed with deale, two . . . windows of . . . lights, and two casements, newe glazed, and iron barres, etc., etc.

No. 3.

In the Study. Item.—A transomed wyndowe newe glased of ten lights, without barres, no casement, a drawe wyndow, etc., etc.

In Rowland Beresford Chamber. Item.—Two fair windowes of VIII lights, a peece besides thereto newlie glased, etc., etc., a dore to the Study in that chamber with a very good lock and key, in that Study a clere story

Photo Albert Hester.

BROOKE HOUSE, HACKNEY, INTERIOR OF STUDY.

of two lights, with one casement and iron barres and two shelves, etc., etc.

In the Great Chamber. Item.—The same chamber waynscotted, etc., etc., three casements and two ende lights in the study, within it a dore lock and key, the study waynscotted with deal, and two windows glased with XII lights, II casements iron bars, a tabell with frame and III . . . etc."

During the course of my investigations at Hackney I paid a visit to the house, and was delighted to find it in excellent condition, with many of its Elizabethan and pre-Elizabethan rooms hardly changed since its occupancy by the Earl and Countess of Oxford. It is now used as a private hospital, and the director, Dr. Johnston, most courteously showed me all over the building and gave me every opportunity of endeavouring to reconstruct its appearance and the position of the various rooms as they existed in 1604. One room with two windows facing south, a small room at the end of the Great Gallery, might, I fancied, have been the " study " alluded to in the Inventory of 1609, where some of the most famous works in English literature may have first seen the light.

It was strange to think that this was the very house, perhaps even the very study with its two end lights, opening out from the Great Chamber, where Edward de Vere sat writing till arrested by the " fell sergeant death."

Perhaps from this very room were issued those sheets of

The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet announced on the title page of the Quarto edition of 1604 to be "newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie."

Perhaps his cousin, Horace Vere, was in his mind when he wrote the famous appeal of the dying prince :

"Horatio, I am dead ;
Thou livest ; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
* * * * * *
O God ! † Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall I leave †
behind me !
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story."

No one can say. "The rest is silence." Horace now lies beside his brother, Sir Francis Vere, under one of the most beautiful and striking monuments in Westminster Abbey.‡ But the kneeling warrior gives no sign, and the half-opened lips have no message to deliver, unless, indeed, we may fancy them to be appealing to us to accomplish an unfulfilled duty, the dissipation of the cloud of misrepresentation and mystery which for more than three hundred years have concealed the true features of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

† As in the Quarto edition of 1604.
‡ See Plate XII and Appendix F.

APPENDIX A

ROBERT SOUTHWELL AND OXFORD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ROMAN CATHOLICISM

THE unconscious witness of Robert Southwell forms an important link in the identification of " our ever-living Poet."

He deserves remembrance, however, on his own account, not only as a brave man who was faithful to his convictions, but also as one of the Elizabethan singers who form the chief glory of our literature.

In Aubrey de Vere's *Select Specimens of the English Poets*, 1858, the following biographical notice and two short poems are given as a record of his life and as specimens of his work.

It will be noticed that the two poems are in the *Venus and Adonis* metre, the metre by which Edward de Vere was first identified (see *Shakespeare Identified*, p. 137).

" Robert Southwell was born A.D. 1560, and underwent his martyrdom A.D. 1595. Of all the hundred and twenty-eight Catholic priests put to death in Elizabeth's reign, not one was more worthy of pious commemoration. Descended from an ancient family in Norfolk, he was educated on the Continent, and became a Jesuit at Rome. While on the English mission, he resided chiefly at the house of Anne, Countess of Arundel, who died in the

Tower of London. He was thrown into prison in 1592, where he remained three years, during which time he was put on the rack ten several times. Nothing could be proved against him, except what he confessed; that he was a Catholic priest and prepared to die for his faith. Such was the condition of the dungeon in which Southwell suffered his long captivity, that his own father petitioned that he might be released from it, although but to die.

"On the 21st February, 1595, he was hung, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn, being subjected, during a prolonged death, to those horrible tortures commonly undergone by the martyrs of that reign, tortures to which he replied only by repeatedly making the sign of the cross. Besides his poems, which possess a solid energy of diction, as well as a noble spiritual elevation, Southwell left behind him two works in prose, which abound in beauty and pathos, *Mary Magdalene's Funeral Tears*, and the *Triumphs over Death*."

"Times go by Turns

"The loppèd tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower:
Time goes by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

"The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow;
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb:
Her tides have equal times to come and go;
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web:
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

" Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring ;
Not endless night, yet not eternal day :
The saddest birds a season find to sing ;
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay.
Thus with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That men may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

" A chance may win that by mischance was lost ;
That net that holds no great takes little fish ;
In some things all, in all things none are cross'd ;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish.
Unmingled joys here to no man befall ;
Who least, hath some ; who most, hath never all."

" Scorn not the Least

" Where words are weak, and foes encount'ring strong,
Where mightier do assault than do defend,
The feeble part puts up enforcèd wrong,
And silent sees that speech could not amend :
Yet higher powers must think, though they repine,
When sun is set, the little stars will shine.

" While pike doth range, the silly tench doth fly,
And crouch in privy creeks with smaller fish ;
Yet pikes are caught when little fish go by,
These fleet afloat, while those do fill the dish,
There is a time even for the worms to creep,
And suck the dew while all their foes do sleep.

" The merlin cannot ever soar on high,
Nor greedy greyhound still pursue the chase ;
The tender lark will find a time to fly,
And fearful hare to run a quiet race.
He that high growth on cedars did bestow,
Gave also lowly mushrooms leave to grow.

" In Haman's pomp poor Mardocheus wept,
Yet God did turn his fate upon his foe ;
The Lazar pin'd, while Dives' feast was kept,
Yet he to heaven—to hell did Dives go.
We trample grass, and prize the flowers of May ;
Yet grass is green when flowers do fade away."

It is interesting to note that the three names Oxford, Southwell, Vaux, which in combination form the pivot of the Brooke House argument in connection with events from 1586 to 1596, are, in a similar religious connection, found in combination at the time of the Catholic mission under the leadership of Parsons and Campion in 1581.

The following quotation from Froude's *Elizabeth*, Chapter XXVIII, refers to the revival of 1581 : " Lord Oxford Burleigh's ill-conditioned son-in-law, Sir Francis Southwell, Lord Vaux . . . and many more of high blood were early ' reconciled ' (to the Catholic Church)."

Although I have not been able to identify Sir Francis Southwell, it is practically certain that he belonged to the same aristocratic Norfolk family as the poet Robert Southwell. Thus in the Harleian *Visitations of Norfolk*, 1563, 1589, 1613, there are seven Southwells of the name of Francis, any one of whom may have been subsequently knighted.

William, the third Baron Vaux (1542 (?)–1595), was a devoted Catholic, and in 1581 he offered the Jesuit Edmund Campion an asylum in his houses at Hackney and Harrowden (*Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. lviii, p. 196).

The chapel at King's Place, of which an engraving is

given in Plate XI, was, therefore, doubtless used both by Edmund Campion and Robert Southwell for the celebration of the rites of the old religion.

Thomas, the second Baron Vaux (1510–1556)—father of William—was a poet. One of his contributions to Tottel's *Miscellany*, published in 1557, is headed " The Aged Lover, renounces Love." Three verses of this song, somewhat inaccurately quoted, are sung by the First Gravedigger in *Hamlet*, Act V, Scene 1.

Edward de Vere and William Vaux were undoubtedly near neighbours at Hackney from 1592 to 1595. Their friendship must have dated at least from the days of the Catholic revival of 1581, and the use made of Thomas Vaux's song in *Hamlet* is an indication of " Shakespeare's " close connection with the family. There can be very little doubt that Oxford was party to the protection afforded to Robert Southwell.

The ninth and last of the " special characteristics " postulated for " Shakespeare " by Mr. J. Thomas Looney in his *Shakespeare Identified*, p. 131, is the following : " Of probable Catholic leanings, but touched with scepticism."

Oxford's prominence in the Catholic revival of 1581 and his apparently negative attitude in the following decade, while his friend, Lord Vaux, was being fined and kept under official supervision owing to his Catholic tendencies, together constitute evidence on this point which is in no way inconsistent with the de Vere theory of Shakespearean authorship.

APPENDIX B

(See Page 19)

THE USE OF THE COMPOUND WORD "EVER-LIVING" IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

I HAVE looked up this word in all the principal dictionaries, from Dr. Johnson's famous volumes, published in 1755, to the great *Oxford English Dictionary* of Murray and Bradley, the publication of which commenced in 1884, and *The Century Dictionary*, published in New York between 1889 and 1891.

The following are the examples of the use of the word given in Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary :*

> " Is not from hence the way, that leadeth right
> To that most glorious house, that glist'reth bright
> With burning stars and *everliving* fires ? "
> Spenser's *Faery Queen*, Book I, canto 10, line 50 (1590).

> " In that he is man, he received life from the Father, as the fountain of that *everliving* Deity."—Hooker (1593).

> " God's justice in the one, and his goodness in the other, is exercised for evermore, as the *everliving* subjects of his reward and punishment."—Raleigh's *History of the World* (1614).

"The instinct of brutes and insects can be the effect of nothing else than the wisdom and skill of a powerful *everliving* agent."—Newton's *Optics* (1704).

Dr. Murray's *Oxford Dictionary* gives the two foregoing quotations from Raleigh and Newton and, in addition, the following:

"Very God and man, the only and *everliving* Saviour."—Coverdale's *Old Faith* (1547).

"That *ever-living* man of memory
Henry the Fifth."
Shakespeare, I *Henry VI*, Act IV, Scene 3, line 51 (1591).

"*Everliving* praise to her loving Delia."
W. Clarke in *Shaks. C. Praise*, 15 (1595).

"While the hand of heaven is giving
Comfort from the *ever-living*."
Breton, *Blessed Heart*, V, 15 (1601).

"So many idle hours as here he loiters,
So many *ever-living* names he loses."
Fletcher, *The Humourous Lieutenant*, Act I, Scene 1 (before 1625).

"She found the *ever-living* gods
Assembled in the halls of Jupiter."
Bryant's translation of the *Iliad*, II, XV, 77 (1870).

"The *ever-living* gifts of Grecian art and architecture and letters."—John Morley, *Voltaire* (1886).

The *Century Dictionary*, in addition to the quotations

from Spenser and Fletcher given above, quotes the following from R. W. Gilder, a modern American writer :

" The *ever-living*
High and most glorious poets."
Call Me not Dead.

So far there is only one instance of the use of the word in connection with an individual, namely, the quotation from Shakespeare, where, in the *First Part of King Henry the Sixth*, it is applied to the late King Henry V.

A reference to the Shakespeare Concordance shows that the word is not used by him anywhere else. The following concordances have been consulted, with results as shown below :

The Authorised Version of the Bible. *Nil.*
Milton. *Nil.*
*Pope. One example.
" *Ever-living* lamps depend in rows."
Temple of Fame, 144.
*Gray. *Nil.*
*Goldsmith. *Nil.*
Burns. *Nil.*
*Keats. *Nil.*
*Byron. *Nil.*
Shelley. Seven examples :
" With a wreath of *ever-living* flame."
Queen Mab, VI, 37.

* These six concordances exist only in typescript. They have been compiled by Mr. Frank Rawson, C.M.G., late Indian Public Works Department, Oriental Club, Hanover Square, London, W. 1. He has kindly looked through them all, and has found that the word *ever-living* occurs once only in Pope, and not at all in any of the others.

" Wake and feed on *ever-living* woe."
Prince Athanase, I, 74.

" Were as the clear and *ever-living* brooks."
Adonais (*a cancelled passage*).

" The dreadful might of *ever-living* limbs."
Prom., III, 1, 22.

" The soul of joy, ye *ever-living* Gods."
Prom., III, 1, 31.

" With *ever-living* leaves, and fruits and flowers."
Prom., III, 3, 123.

" Arrayed against the *ever-living* Gods."
Naples, 128.

Wordsworth. Two examples :

" Unite to magnify the *Ever-living*."
Power of Sound, 195.

" Such help ; the *ever-living* universe."
Prelude, 6, 774.

*Longfellow. *Nil.*

Tennyson. One example :

" Heaven-sweet Evangel *ever-living* word."
Sir J. Oldcastle.

The foregoing twenty-three examples of the use of the word range over a period of about three hundred years. Eighteen examples are from the poets, and five from prose writers.

In four of the prose examples the word is used in a religious sense.

* See note on p. 96.

We may therefore say, generally, that poetry and religion monopolise the word.

Lastly, there is only one example referring to an individual who is not a divine being, and that is the reference in the *First Part of King Henry VI*, where Sir William Lucy complains that, owing to Somerset's delay in sending reinforcements to Talbot and his son John, who are attacked by Orleans, Charles, Burgundy, Alençon, and Reignier,

> " Sleeping neglection doth betray to loss
> The conquest of our scarce-cold conqueror,
> That *ever-living* man of memory,
> Henry the Fifth."

It would seem not unlikely that Thomas Thorpe had this quotation from *Henry VI*, *Part I*, in his mind when he alluded to " our ever-living Poet " in the Dedication of *The Sonnets* to " Mr. W. H."

In any case, we may fairly say that, if he uses the word in connection with a living man, he uses the word in a sense unknown to English literature, or, indeed, to the English language.

APPENDIX C

WILL OF ELIZABETH DE VERE, COUNTESS DOWAGER OF OXFORD

Extracted from the Principal Registry of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice

In the name of God Amen The XXVth daie of November in the yeare of our Lord God one Thousand sixe hundred and Twelve, I the lady Elizabeth Vere Countesse Dowager of Oxenford late wife of Edward de Vere late Earle of Oxenford doe make and ordayne this my last will and Testament in manner and forme followinge. First and principally I commend my soule into the hande of Allmightie God assuredly believing that as he first gave it to me so he will likewise receave it whensoever it shall please him to seperate and parte the same from my body, and that beinge washed from all my synnes in the pretious bloude of my onlie savio[r] and redeemer Christe Jesus hee will make mee bothe in soule and body partaker of those heavenlie joyes w[ch] are both unspeakable and endles In w[ch] hope and full assurance of a joyfull resurrecion at the last daye, I joyfullie committ my bodie to the earth from whence it was taken desiringe to be buried in the Church of Hackney w[th]in the Countie of Middlesex, as neare unto the bodie

of my said late deare and noble lorde and husband as maye bee and that to be done as privately and with as little pompe and ceremonie as possible may be. Onlie I will that there bee in the said Church erected for us a tombe fittinge our degree and of such chardge as shall seem good to myne Executors hereafter named, And whereas I stand indebted in diverse Sommes of money, as namely unto my brother Fraunces Trentham of Rocester wthin the Countie of Stafford esquire in foure hundred poundes, unto Mr Ferne in twoe hundreth poundes principall debte, beside the use, and to Mr Prescott gouldsmith in Cheapeside upon pawne of part of my plate now remayning with him, in Twoe hundreth and odd poundes I desire that all these debtes may be carefullie dischardged and likewise all such other as to my Executors hereafter named shall appear to bee due and owinge by me if anie such shall happen to bee, with allowance to bee made to everie of them for the forbearance thereof after the rate of Tenne poundes for everie hundreth poundes for one yeare untill such tyme as my said Executors can raise money and make payment of my said debte out of such estate and meanes as I shall leave unto them for that purpose. Item I give unto my deare and lovinge sonne Henrie de Vere Earle of Oxenforde to be kepte by him as a remembrance of my motherlie love unto him my roape of great pearle, my newe Jewell, my thirteene diamond buttons, and all those rich garmente, Cloakes, bedding, and houshouldstuffe fyne diaper and damaske lynnen, w^{ch} are now in my cosen John Veres howse, All which Jewells and other thinges, I will shall bee delivered to my said sonne wthin

sixe monethes after the daye of his mariage or at his age of sixe and Twentie yeares w^ch^ shall first happen, And my will and meaninge is that if my said sonne shall happen to departe this life before either of said tymes before lymited for deliverie of the said Jewells and other thinges unto him, Then I will the same unto the eldest sonne of the bodie of my said sonne lawfullie to bee begotten w^ch^ shall bee livinge or begotten at such death of my said sonne, And for defalte of such sonne, to the daughter or daughters of the bodie of my said Sonne lawfullie to be begotten And if hee have noe sonne or daughter lawfullie begotten, Then I will the same Jewells and other thinges shall remayne unto myne Executors, Item I give unto my deare and lovinge mother my silver Cawdle cuppe my little guilte bell my silver fruite dishe with the foote and my blacke satten gowne cutte and laced. And whereas I have had of my saide brother Trentham the somme of foure hundred poundes for divers yeeres past and have given him noe allowance for the same I do therefore in recompense thereof give unto him twoe hundred markes of lawfull english money and alsoe the somme of twoe hundreth poundes more for a legacy Item I give to my loving sister the Lady Stanhope my fifteene new peeces of silver vessell my black velvet gowne laced my blacke satten gowne my black taffitie gowne with silver lace my blacke and silver chamblet gowne my crimson velvitte petticote and my kirtles of white cloth of silver and (*sic*) collo^r^ cloath of silver. Item I give unto my sister Trentham my borders of rubies and diamondes my white satten gowne my playne black

satten gowne my petticoate of cloth of gold and my kirtle of white satten with gould lace. Item I give unto Vere Trentham my god-daughter my jewell enamelled with redd and dyamondes in it. Alsoe I give and bequeath unto Marie Trentham (whom I intend if God give me life to educate and traine up) Five Hundred poundes towardes her preferment in mariage the same to be paid after my debts and all my other legacies be satisfied and paide and the charges of my funerall and tombe bee discharged Alsoe I give unto my lovinge kinswoeman and tried friend the ladie Manweringe wife unto Sir George Manweringe Knighte my guilte standinge cuppe with a cover Item I give unto my worthie good freind Sir Edward Moore Knighte my longe silver bason with the ewer to it Item I give unto my ladie Waller my kirtle of black cloath of goulde Item I give unto my uncle Snead my twoe guilte candle-stickes I give to Mrs. Libbe my blacke taffita gowne and kirtle my calimanco gowne and my peece of tabyne of about twentie yardes Item I give to my lovinge cosen John Veere Esq my deepe silver boale and to my nephew Mr Peregryne Berty twentie poundes in gould Alsoe I give unto my good freind John Wright of Grayes Inne w^{t}hin the Countie of Middlesex esquier one hundreth poundes presuminge hee will performe his best endeavor to preserve the rightes of my sonnes estate and to assiste him w^{t}h his best advise in all courses to advance his good fortunes and to increase his vertue and honor Item I give to Margerie fflower my wayting woeman my tawney satten gowne I give to Marie my chambermaid one other gowne at the

discrecõn of myne Executors I give to the said Margerie fflower Xli and to the said Marie my my (*sic*) chambermaid five poundes And to the said Margerie and Marie equallie to bee devided betweene them all my wearinge lynnen about my bodie I give to my Laundrie maide fortie shillinge To Katherine Three poundes To Gallantyne the Frenchman that serveth me five poundes To (*sic*) Thoroughgood five poundes To Thomas my Taylo^{r} dwelling wth mee five markes To Thomas my coachman five markes To John Bill my late servant five poundes Item I give unto my dombe man yearelie duringe his life (*sic*) powndes to be paide him by my Executors quarterlie at the foure most usuall feastes of the yeare by even and equall portions. Item I give for the releefe of the poore prisoners in the Counters in London in Newgate and Ludgate in the hospitalls of Southwarke and St. Bartholomewes in the prisons of the Kinges benche the Marshallsey and the White Lyon in Southwarke Thirtie poundes that is to saye five markes a peece to everie of the said Counters prisons and hospitalles Itm I will that there be distributed on the daye of my buriall to the poore people of the parish wherein I shall happen to die Tenne poundes and to the poore of the said parish of Hackney Twentie poundes Alsoe I give to the poore of Castle Heningham (*sic*) in Essex XX^{li} to bee distributed at the discrecõn of myne Executors I make and ordaine the said S^{r} Edward Moore Frauncis Trentham and John Wright the Executors of this my last will and Testament desiringe them to see the same dulie and faithfullie performed in everi behalf And my will and meaninge is

that my said Executors and the Survivors of them shalbe allowed all such charges and expences as they or any of them shall in anie sorte disburse expend or laie out in uppon or about the performance or execucõn of this my will or anie matter cause or occasion touchinge or concerninge the same or the administration thereof Alsoe whereas by my twoe severall deedes indented bearinge date the first daye of this instant moneth of November made between me on the one parte and the said S^r^ Edward Moore Frauncis Trentham and John Wright on the other parte I have devised leased graunted bargained and sould to the said S^r^ Edward Moore Frauncis Trentham and John Wright all that the great Parke of Hedingham ad Castrum aforesaide and certaine partes and parcells of the Castle Parke and the little Parke there as alsoe the Scite and precincte of the late Priorie there and all the landes Tenementes and hereditaments to the same late belonginge and appertagninge And alsoe the Rectorie or parsonage of Water Belchampe w^th^in the said Countie of Essex To have and to hold to the said S^r^ Edward Moore Frauncis Trentham and John Wright their Executors Administrators and Assignes from the feast of St. Michaell the Archangell nowe last past untill the full end and terme of Twentie yeares from thenceforth next ensuinge by and under certaine yearlie Rentes as in and by the saide severall deedes indented more fullie and plainelie maye appeare which saide severall deedes were soe by mee made in trust thereby to enable them to raise such sommes of money as should sufficientlie serve and suffice to dischardge and paye all my debtes and legacies and funerall

expences as alsoe all such other paymentes and disbursementes as should bee anie waies expended disbursed or laid out by my said Executors or anie of them for or about the performance of this my will or for about or concerninge anie cause matter or thinge towchinge or concerninge the Administracion or execucion thereof And afterwardes the overplus and surplusage of the proffitts and benefite thereof to bee to the onlie use and behoofe of my said sonne and of such his children or other persons severallie successivelie and respectivelie as from tyme to tyme successivelie shalbee seiced of the imediate estate in revercion dependinge and expectant upon anie the said severall estates or termes graunted passed or conveyed in or by the said recited deedes or either of them severallie and respectivelie Now I doe by these presents signifie and declare my will and meaninge to bee, that the said severall estates soe made and graunted in and by the said severall deeds indented shalbee holden and enjoyed by the said S[r] Edward Moore Frauncis Trentham and John Wright to such uses intentes and purposes and upon such truste and confidence as is lastlie before herein recited and expressed And I doe further will that the ferme of Playstowe and other the portions of tithes late the inheritance of my said late husband Edward late Earle of Oxenford shalbee sold towardes the payment and satisfaccion of my said debtes and legacies and performance of this my will by such persons as are now estated therein by force of an Acte of parliamt in that behalf made Item I give and bequeath unto my said sonne Henri Earle of Oxenford the said scite and precincte of the said late

Priorie and all the landes Tenementes Hereditamentes and appurtenances to the same late belonginge and appertayninge and alsoe the said Rectorie or parsonage of Water Belchampe wthin the said Countie of Essex and all other my landes Tenementes and hereditamentes with there and everie of there appurtenances wthin the said Countie of Essex whereof I am seized of an estate in fee simple to mee and my heires To have and to holde the same unto my said sonne for and duringe the terme of his naturall life without impeachment of or for anie manner of waste and from and after his decease Then to the first sonne of the bodie of my said sonne lawfullie to bee begotten and to the heires males of the bodie of my said sonne lawfullie begotten And for defalte of such issue Then to the second sonne of the bodie of my saide sonne lawfully to bee begotten and to the heires males of the bodie of the said second sonne lawfullie to bee begotten And for defalte of such issue then to everie other sonne of the bodie of my said sonne lawfullie to bee begotten succesivelie one after another as they shalbee in senioritie and prioritie of age and to the heires males of the bodie of everie such sonne lawfullie to bee begotten successivelie and respectively one after another in manner and forme aforesaid And for defalte of such issue then to the heires of the bodie of the said first sonne of the bodie of my said sonne Henrie Earle of Oxenford lawfullie to be begotten and for defalt of such issue then to the heires of of (*sic*) the bodie of all and everie other of the said sonnes of the bodie of my said sonne Henrie Earle of Oxenford lawfullie to bee begotten severallie and

successivelie one after another in forme aforesaid And for defalte of such issue Then to all and everie the daughters of the bodie of my said sonne lawfullie to bee begotten and to the heires of the bodies of the same daughters lawfullie to bee begotten and for wante of such issue then to my said brother Frauncis Trentham and unto his heires for ever the said Frauncis Trentham or his heires payinge unto John Posthumus Stanhope the youngest sonne of my sister the ladie Stanhope if the said John Posthumus Stanhoppe shalbee then livinge the full somme of one Thowsande poundes of lawfull English money at the Fontestone wthin the Temple Church London wthin one yeare next after the same premisses shall accrue happen or come unto the said Frauncis Trentham or his heires by such faylinge of the issues of the bodie of my said sonne as is aforesaid And I doe by these presentes revoake fustrate (*sic*) and make voyde all former and other Willes whatsoever I have heretofore made and have published this as my last Will and Testament and sealed and subscribed the same the daye and yeare first above written in the presence of Ka: Stanhoppe ff. Trentham Jo: Wright Willm Thorowgood Wil: Hawkeridge, Eliza: Oxenforde.

Proved 15 Feb. 1612* on the oath of Sir Edward Moore Knt. Frauncis Trentham and John Wright Esq. Executors named in the said Will Letters of Administration of the goods of the said deceased granted by this Court as by way of intestacy having been introduced and renounced, etc.

P. C. C. 10 Capell.

* O.S.

APPENDIX D

(See Page 34 and Plate VI).

THE FUNERAL OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

" Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which proves more short than waste or ruining ?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent
For compound sweet ; foregoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent ?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art,
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborn'd *Informer !* a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control."

Sonnet No. 125.

THE funeral of Queen Elizabeth took place on the 28th April, 1603. The representation of the hearse in Plate VI is taken from Plate No. 6 of a series of seven plates published April 23rd, 1791, and described as follows :

" The Funeral Procession of Queen Elizabeth, from a Drawing of the time, supposed to be by the hand of William Camden, then Clarencieux King at Arms, which was in the

Possession of John Wilmot Esq., F.R.S. and by him deposited in the British Museum."

A detailed order of the funeral procession is given in an old broadsheet published at the time by M. Lawe, and doubtless sold in the streets for the information of the general public.

The broadsheet is reprinted in full in Volume II. of *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, by John Nichols, F.S.A., Edinburgh and Perth, 1788.

The title of the broadsheet is as follows :

" Elizabetha Quasi Vivens
Eliza's Funeral
A fewe Aprill Drops, showred on
the Hearse of dead Eliza.
Or, The funerall Tears of a true hearted Subject
By H.P.
London, Printed by E. Allde for
M. Lawe, dwelling in Paules Church-
yard, neere unto Saint Austens-gate
1603."

The dedication is addressed :

" To the Worthy and Curteous Gentle-
man Mr Richard Hildersham, H.P.
wisheth increase of Worship and
Virtue."

And is signed

" Your Worship's most obsequious,
HENRY PETOWE."

The pamphlet contains, after two introductory poems,

"The true Order and formall Proceeding at the Funerall of the most high, renowned, famous, and mightye Princesse, ELIZABETH, of England, France, and Ireland, late Queene, from Whitehall to the Cathedral Church of Westminster The 28 day of Aprill 1603."

After another poem, the order of the procession is given as follows:

"These Persons heerafter named came in their place and order, as was appointed. Also the names of such Noblemen and Gentlemen as caryed the Standards and other Ornaments at the Funerall.
First, knight marshals men, to make roome,
Then folowed 15 poore men.
Next 260 poore women, foure and foure in a rank,
Then servants of gentlemen, esquires, and knights,
Two porters.
Four trumpeters."

And so on for a page or so until we come to:

"Foure trumpeters.

Blewemantle

A sergeant at arms.

The standard of the Greyhound borne by Master Herbert * brother to the Erle of Pembroke."

* Sir Philip Herbert, created Earl of Montgomery, May 4, 1605, and, after the death of his brother, in 1630, Earl of Pembroke. He died January 3, 1652.

Appendix D

After three more pages we come to :

" The great imbrodered banner of England, borne by the Earle
of Pembroke, assisted by the Lord Howard of Effingham
Somerset and *Richmond*
Yorke, helme and crest.
Chester, target.
Norrey, king at armes, swoord.
Clarencieux king at armes, cote.
Art thou yet dry, as if thou hadst not wept ?
Reade further then, and thou wilt force a teare.
But hadst thou seene her figure as she slept,
In memorie thou would'st her semblance beare.
Whose deare remembrance would so touch thy minde,
That in thy passion thou no meane could'st find.

The lively picture of her Majestie's whole body, in her parliament robes,
with a crowne on her head, and a scepter in her hand, lying on
the corpes inshrined in leade, and balmed ; covered with
purple velvet ; borne in a charriot, drawne by
foure horses, trapt in blacke velvet.
Gentlemen ushers, with white roddes.
A canopie over the corpes, borne by six knights.
Six earles, assistants unto the bodye.
On each side the corpes six banerols, caryed by twelve noblemen.
Footemen.
The Earle of Worcester, maister of the horse,
leading the palfrey of honour.
Two esquiers and a groome, to attend and leade him away.
Gentleman usher of the privie chamber.
Garter king at armes.
The lady marques of Northampton, chiefe mourner :
assisted by the Lord Treasurer and the Lord Admirall ;

her traine caryed up by two Countesses,
and Sir John Stanhop, Master Vice Chamberlaine
Two Earles assistants to her.
Fourteen Countesses assistants.
Countesses.
Ladies of honour.
Viscountesses.
Earles daughters.
Baronesses.
Maides of honour of the privie chamber,
Captaine of the guard, with all the guard following,
five and five in a ranke, holding
their holberds downeward."

The pamphlet closes with the names of the twelve barons who carried the twelve bannerols, "beginning at the youngest first."

A careful examination of Camden's drawing reproduced on Plate VI shows nineteen figures between the spectator and the hearse.

Seven of these are marked "Gentlemen Pentioners"; the remaining twelve—according to Petowe's broadsheet—would consist of the following:

"Bearing the Canopie" 3 Knights,
"Assistants unto the bodye" 3 Earls,
"Carrying the banerols" 6 Barons,

and, of course, the same number on the other side.

Camden's drawing and Petowe's broadsheet are thus seen to confirm one another.

We may, therefore, feel practically certain that the Earl of Oxford, whose hereditary position as Lord High Chamber-

lain of England entailed duties in connection with the person of the Sovereign, must have been one of the Earls described by Petowe as " assistants unto the bodye," who are seen in Camden's drawing to be walking alongside the knights whom Petowe shows as " bearing the Canopie."

The word " obsequious " in the ninth line of Sonnet No. 125 seems almost to suggest that the occasion was a funeral. The word-play implied is not only very characteristic of " Shakespeare," but has its precedent in Henry Petowe's dedication. " Your Worship's most obsequious " is, I should imagine, a very unusual form of subscription.

It is interesting to note that Stow writes in his *Annals*, p. 815, of this very scene :

" The 28 day of Aprill, being her funerall-day, at which the cittie of Westminster was surcharged with multitudes of all sorts of people in their streetes, houses, windows, leads, and gutters, that came to see the *obsequie ;* and when they beheld her statue or picture lying uppon the coffin set forth in royall robes, having a crowne uppon the head thereof, and a ball and scepter in either hand ; there was such a generall sighing, groning, and weeping, as the like hath not beene seene or knowne in the memorie of man, neyther doth any historie mention any people, time, or state, to make like lamentation for the death of their Soveraygne."

Mr. J. Thomas Looney, to whom the foregoing description of Queen Elizabeth's funeral was sent for criticism, has very kindly made the following comments :

" The complete omission of Oxford's name from Petowe's broadsheet, in view of his exalted position as hereditary Lord

Great Chamberlain, is, in itself, striking. The way in which his name seems to elude us whenever we look for it in connections where we might reasonably expect to find it, quite bears out the assumption that he went out of his way to exclude or erase it from contemporary records. The particular record which you reproduce in part, manifestly aims at precision and fullness of detail, especially with respect to ' the names of such noblemen and gentlemen as carried Standards and other Ornaments at the Funeral.' Yet there seems to be a very deliberate omission, in their proper connection, of the names of what was in fact the central group : an omission just as deliberately rectified, in part, at the close, by a list of ' the twelve barons who carried the twelve bannerols.' *The six earls who were ' assistants unto the bodye,'* although of superior station, are *the only noblemen* occupying prominent positions *whose names do not appear in the record.* And, the more conspicuous posts having evidently been assigned to others, this is just where we should have expected to find the name of the Earl of Oxford, in view of his special office, some of the functions of which we know he actually performed at the coronation of Elizabeth's successor.

" Now the remarkable fact to me is that this document was published by Matthew Lawe, who, precisely at this time (25th June 1603) took over the publication of several Shakespeare plays (see Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare,* notes pp. 124 and 242, 1916 ed.), and must, therefore, have been in relationship, direct or indirect, with ' Shakespeare,' whoever he was."

APPENDIX E

(See Page 66 n. and Plate VIII)

LETTER DATED 30TH OCTOBER, 1584, FROM THE EARL OF OXFORD TO LORD BURLEIGH, COMPLAINING THAT THE LATTER HAD SENT FOR LYLY IN ORDER TO DISCUSS HIS—OXFORD'S—PRIVATE AFFAIRS WITH HIM.*

It is not unknowne to yor Lo. that I have entred into a greate nomber of bondes to suche, as have purchasyd landes of me, to discharge them of all Incombraunces: And bycause I stande indebtid unto her Ma^tie^ (as yor Lo. knowythe) many of ye said purchasers do greatly feare some troble likely to fall uppon them, by reason of her Ma^tes^ said debt, & especially if the Londes of ye Lo. Darcey and Sr William Walgrave should be extendyd for the same, who have two severall statutes of greate sommes for their discharge. Wheruppon many of ye said purchasers have ben suters unto me to procuer the dischargynge of her Ma^tes^ said debt, and do seme very willinge to beare the burden thereof, yf by my meanes the same might be stalled paiable at some convenyent dayes. I have therfore thought good to acquaynte yor Lo. wt this their suyte, requierynge moste earnestly yor Lo. furtheraunce in this behalfe, wherby I shalbe unburdened of a greate care, wc I have for the savynge of my honor, And shall by this meanes also vnburden my wives Ioincture of yt charge wc might happen herafter

* The letter is in the handwriting of a secretary. The words "Youre Lordships," the signature, and the postscript are in Lord Oxford's own hand.

to be ymposyd uppon ye same, yf god should call yor Lo. and me away before her.

Your Lordships.
Edward Oxeford.

My Lord, this other day yowre man stainner towld me, that yow sent for Amis my man, and yf he wear absent, that Lylle showld come unto yow. I sent Amis for he was in ye way. And I thinke very strange yt yowre Lord. showld enter into that course towards me, wherby I must lerne yt I knew not before, bothe of yowre opinion and good will towards me. But I pray, my lord, leave yt course, for I mean not to be yowre ward nor yowre chyld, I serve her magestie, and I am that I am, and by allyance neare to yowre lordship, but fre, and scorne to be offred that iniurie, to thinke I am so weake of government as to be ruled by servants, or not able to governe my self. If yowre Lord. take and follow this course, yow deceyve yowre self, and make me take an other course than yet I have not thought of. whearfore thes shalbe to desyre yowre Lordship yf yt I may make account of yowre friendship that yow will leauve that cours as hurtfull to us bothe.

Endorsed

To the right honorable my very good
Lorde the Lo. Theausorer of England.
xxx Octob. 1584.
The Erle of Oxford
by Amise his servant
For securing those yt had pur-
chased lands of him, his desire
to take a course to
pay his debt to ye Queen.

British Museum, *Lansdowne MSS.*, 42 No. 39.

APPENDIX F

(See Page 88 and Plate XII)

THE DE VERE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

THE following members of Edward de Vere's family are buried in the Chapel of St. Nicholas :

(1) Anne, daughter of Lord Burleigh, his first wife, who died on the 6th June, 1588, and was buried on the 25th June.
(2) Elizabeth, his eldest daughter, wife of William Stanley, sixth Earl of Derby. She died at Richmond on the 10th March, 1627, and was buried on the following day.
(3) Susan, his youngest daughter, wife of Philip Herbert, first Earl of Montgomery. She was buried on the 1st February, 1629.

Edward de Vere's second daughter, Bridget, who married Francis, Lord Norris—afterwards created Earl of Berkshire—does not appear to have been buried in the Abbey, but her grand-daughter, Lady Bridget, Countess of Lyndsy, was buried in St. Andrew's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, on the 24th March, 1657.

The present Earls of Derby, Abingdon, and Pembroke

are the descendants of Elizabeth, Bridget, and Susan respectively.

A beautiful aquatint of St. Nicholas Chapel showing Lady Oxford's recumbent figure in the light, Lady Burleigh's being in the shade behind it, is given opposite p. 119 of Vol. II of Ackerman's *History of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's, Westminster*, 1812.

The following is the accompanying description :

"This is one of the most costly and splendid monuments which the Abbey, that abounds in them, can boast. Columns and pyramids, marble and porphyry, kneeling and recumbent figures, with every suitable enrichment, compose this magnificent memorial. In the lower compartment lies the effigies of Lady Burleigh, with her daughter Anne, Countess of Oxford, and her other children and grandchildren kneeling at her head and feet. In the upper compartment is the figure of Lord Burleigh on his knees, dressed in his parliamentary robes, and with the ensigns of the Garter.

"The inscription represents Lady Burleigh as a person of uncommon learning, and describes her various charities. She died April 4, 1589, aged 63. Lady Oxford died June 5, 1588."

The following *résumé* of the long Latin epitaph on the memorial is given by Dean Stanley in his *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 2nd Edition, pp. 214, 215.

"'If anyone asks,' says his epitaph, 'who is that aged man, on bended knees, venerable from his hoary hairs, in his robes of state, and with the order of the Garter ?'—the answer is, that we see the great minister of Elizabeth, 'his eyes dim with tears for the loss of those who were dearer to him beyond the whole race of womankind.'

" ' If any ask, who are those noble women, splendidly attired, and who are they at their head and feet ? ' the answer is that the one is Mildred, daughter of Sir Antony Cook, ' partner of her husband's fortunes, through good and evil, during the reigns of Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth.'

* * * * * *

the other ' Anne, his daughter, wedded to the Earl of Oxford ' ; at her feet, his second son, Robert Cecil, first Earl of Salisbury, and at her head her three daughters, Elizabeth, Bridget, and Susan Vere. But ' neither they,' nor his elder son Thomas, nor ' all his grand sons and granddaughters ' will efface the grief with which the old man clings to the sad monument of his lost wife and daughter.' "

The tomb of Sir Francis Vere is in the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist, at the south-east corner of the north transept.

Henry, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, who died on active service in the Low Countries while serving under his kinsman Sir Horace, was buried here in 1625.

Sir Horace Vere, afterwards Lord Vere of Tilbury, was also buried in this chapel, beside his brother Francis, in 1635.

The following description of Sir Francis Vere's memorial is taken from Ackerman's *Westminster Abbey*, vol. ii. p. 187 :

" On the pavement four kneeling esquires, in armour, bear on their shoulders a heavy slab of black marble, on which are battered alabaster portions of armour ; the figure of Sir Francis, clad in a loose gown, lies on a quilt beneath it. On the base of the tomb is this inscription in letters of gold :

"'FRANCISCO VERO,

Equiti Aurato, *Galfredi T. Johannis*, comitis Oxoniae, nepoti; *Brieliae* et *Portsmuthae* praefecto, *Anglicarum* copiarum in *Belgio* ductori summo, *Elizabetha* uxor viro charissimo quocum conjunctissime vixit, hoc supremum amoris et fidei conjugalis monumentum maestissima et cum lacrymis gemens, posuit. Obiit 28 die *Augusti*, an. Salutis 1608, aetatis suae 54.'"

The present *Guide to Westminster Abbey*, 24th edition, 1922, which contains an introductory chapter by Dean Bradley, has the following description of Sir Francis Vere's tomb:

"Sir Francis Vere, b. 1554, d. 1609,* a famous soldier in Elizabeth's reign, who 'brought more glory to the name of Vere than he took of blood from the family of Oxford.' Commander-in-chief of the English forces in the Netherlands, he gained honour by his courage at the battle of Nieuport, and by his brave defence of Ostend for five months against the Spanish army. 'A gentleman of singular character, both for arms and letters; of the first, his being train'd up from his youth to the camp, being thirty years in the States' service and twenty years the Queen's general over the English, are sufficient proofs; and for the second, his learned and excellent commentaries do witness.' † The inscription has gone, but the following is an epitaph upon Vere given in Pettigrew's collection:

"'When Vere sought death, arm'd with the sword and shield,
Death was afraid to meet him in the field,
But when his weapons he had laid aside
Death, like a coward, struck him, and he died.'"

* According to the Abbey Register. The date on the inscription is 1608.
† Cunningham's *Handbook*, p. 42.

Photo D. Weller.

TOMB OF SIR FRANCIS VERE.

Appendix F

This beautiful monument was erected by Vere's widow, in imitation of the tomb of Engelbrecht II, Count of Nassau, at Breda. It consists of two slabs of black marble; upon the lower lies the effigy, in white marble, of Sir Francis Vere, with his cloak wrapped round him like a Roman toga. Upon the upper slab, which is supported by four kneeling knights, are the pieces of his armour, to show that he died in his bed, and not upon the field of battle. It is said that Roubiliac, while superintending the erecting of the Nightingale monument, was found one day by Gayfere, the Abbey mason, standing with his arms folded, and his looks fixed upon one of the supporting knights. "As Gayfere approached, the enthusiastic Frenchman laid his hand on his arm, pointed to the figure, and said in a whisper, 'Hush! hush! he vil speak presently.'"*

Opposite p. 187 of Volume II of Ackerman's *Westminster Abbey* is an aquatint of Sir F. Vere's tomb, showing, on the right, the esquire with the half-opened lips.

* *Dart.* II. 2.

APPENDIX G

(See Page x)

THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP

THE following report of the Foundation Meeting of the Fellowship is taken from the *Hackney Spectator* of the 17th November, 1922 :

SHAKESPEARE AT HACKNEY

The following party drove, on Monday the 6th November, to Hackney and visited Brooke House and the old tower of St. Augustine's Church, before having lunch at " The Pembury Arms," in Amhurst Road : Mr. Francis Clarke, Lieutenant R. Dubau, Sir George Greenwood, Rev. and Mrs. Hobart-Hampden, Colonel B. R. Ward. The following gentlemen joined them at luncheon : Mr. T. Aldred, Chief Librarian, Central Library, Hackney ; Mr. A. Hester, St. Kilda's Studio, Clapton, E. 5 ; and Mr. C. W. Slade, representing the *Hackney Spectator*.

The party afterwards proceeded to the Central Library, where Mr. A. Walrond Clarke showed drawings of the old church and of a tomb of grey marble which he thought had been erected to the Earl and Countess of Oxford after the death of the latter in 1612. There were two coats of arms on the tomb at one time, but the brasses had been removed. Mr. Clarke thought these two coats were probably those of Vere and Trentham. There is, however, no written evidence

about this, and in any case the tomb was not erected until after 1612.

A meeting was subsequently held, attended by the foregoing, and, in addition, by Mr. Thurkill Cooke and Colonel M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E.

Miss G. Mellor, Mr. Cecil Palmer, and Brig.-Gen. E. M. Paul, C.B., C.B.E., expressed their regrets at being unable to attend the meeting.

Colonel Ward opened the proceedings by a description of his researches at Hackney, and gave reasons why a new Shakespeare Society was necessary for research and propaganda. He then proposed that Sir George Greenwood take the chair.

This was seconded by Lieutenant R. Dubau and carried unanimously.

The next resolution was proposed by Mr. Francis Clarke, and seconded by Mr. Thurkill Cooke : " That a society be founded called ' The Shakespeare Fellowship,' for research and propaganda. Subscription 10*s*. annually, and 5*s*. for foreign members."

This was carried unanimously.

It was next proposed by Mr. Albert Hester, and seconded by Mr. C. W. Slade, that the officers of the Fellowship be as follows :—President : Sir George Greenwood ; Vice-Presidents : Professor Abel Lefranc, Mr. J. Thomas Looney, and Mr. L. J. Maxse ; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer : Colonel B. R. Ward, 28, FitzGeorge Avenue, W. 14.

Colonel Ward read letters from Professor Abel Lefranc, Mr. Looney, and Mr. Maxse, accepting the office of Vice-President.

The above resolution was then carried unanimously.

It was proposed by Colonel M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E., and seconded by Mr. Hester, " That the *Hackney Spectator*, 44, Amhurst Road, E. 8, be the official organ of the Fellowship."

This was carried unanimously.

The Chairman then made a few remarks, saying that his own work, ever since his Eton and Cambridge days, when he first was attracted to Shakespeare, had been only destructive, but that he hoped that we had now entered upon a period of construction. He was highly honoured by the invitation to act as the first President of " The Shakespeare Fellowship."

The Folio of 1623 was undoubtedly the work of many pens and of one Great Master. Thus, Spedding showed that Fletcher wrote all the best work in *Henry VIII*, and it had since been shown that the rest was written by Massinger. It was now accepted as a fact that Ben Jonson wrote the Prefaces signed by Heminge and Condell.

The aim of the Fellowship was the truth, and the methods of controversy must be courteous.

After a vote of thanks to Colonel Ward as founder of the Fellowship, the meeting closed.

The following is reprinted from the *Hackney Spectator* of the 1st December, 1922.

Objects of the Fellowship

The Fellowship was founded at Hackney on the 6th November, 1922, with the following objects :

(1) To unite in one brotherhood all lovers of Shakespeare who are dissatisfied with the prevailing Stratfordian orthodoxy, and who desire to see the principles of scientific historical criticism applied to the problem of Shakespearean authorship.

(2) To encourage and to organise research among parish registers, wills, and other documents likely to throw light on the subject.

(3) To form the nucleus of a Shakespeare reference library, and to collect lantern slides to be issued on loan for lecturing purposes.

Membership

Membership is open to all persons who sympathise with the objects of the Fellowship, as detailed above.

Subscriptions

The annual subscription is 10*s*., due on the 1st November for the following year. Members joining at an intermediate period pay the proportion of the subscription due. Thus members joining on the 1st February, 1st May, and 1st August in any year would pay 7*s*. 6*d*., 5*s*., and 2*s*. 6*d*. respectively. Foreign members pay an annual subscription of 5*s*.

Officers for 1923

President: Sir George Greenwood.

Vice-Presidents: The Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G., M.D.; Professor Abel Lefranc; Mr. J. Thomas Looney; Mr. L. J. Maxse; Mr. William T. Smedley, Additional Vice-Presidents for 1923 may be elected by the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee: Sir George Greenwood; Mr. Francis Clarke; Colonel M. W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E.; Colonel B. R. Ward, C.M.G.

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General

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